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ABSTRACT

As part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools self-study process for reaffirmation of accreditation, Gainesville College (GC) conducted its second decennial needs assessment survey in fall 1990 to obtain data to assist in college planning and program improvement. Separate survey instruments were developed to gather data from community leaders (n=90) and area high school principals and counselors (n=43). Selected findings included the following: (1) GC's convenient location, small size, reasonable cost, and open-door admissions policy emerged as the college's greatest assets; (2) community leaders felt that GC's transfer and career programs were most important, while high school principals and counselors thought the college should place more emphasis on its transfer and developmental studies programs; (3) GC students were perceived to be well-prepared for transfer to four-year institutions; (4) the college was encouraged to become more involved with local high schools through presentations, summer programs, and other activities; (5) a need existed to increase the visibility of the college; (6) respondents recommended expanding CG in the areas of offerings beyond the two-year degree level; cooperative activities with other schools, colleges, and technical institutes; business and language/multicultural areas; off-campus settings; creative scheduling; and intercollegiate athletics; and (7) there was a need for some type of student housing. Related data tables, and the survey instruments are appended. A paper focusing on the study's methodology, "Environmental Scanning through a Community Needs Assessment," by Norma R. Seerley and J. Foster Watkins, is also attached. (JSP)

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COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY REPORT FALL 1990

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
Gainesville, Georgia 30503

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FOREWORD

During Fall 1990 the second decennial Community Needs Assessment Survey was conducted by Gainesville College. The primary purpose of the study was to obtain input from the College's larger community for use by Gainesville College as it continues in its efforts to do sound planning and to improve its programs and services. Also, the data were gathered as part of the ten-year SACS self-study process which the College is currently involved in for reaffirmation of accreditation.

The College's first Community Needs Assessment Survey in 1980 included an economic impact study and reports on data gathered from several populations: community leaders; high school seniors and counselors; Gainesville College alumni; College administrators, faculty, and staff; and Gainesville College students. Since 1980, Gainesville College has developed and implemented an assessment plan which involves the collection of a wide variety of in-depth information on, and input from, its students, alumni, and College personnel populations on a cyclic basis ranging from one to four years, while input from its larger community constituents remains on a ten-year cycle. Currently, economic impact data are updated regularly and incorporated into the College's data base. Thus, the 1990 Community Needs Assessment Survey concerns feedback only from the larger community through two populations: a sample of community leaders and selected area high school principals and counselors. This Assessment has become an important additional dimension of the College's broader data base currently used in its comprehensive assessment and planning processes.

In order to facilitate the data gathering process, to maintain the integrity of input provided by both of the community subpopulations so that their unique perspectives are reflected, and to be able to provide meaningful feedback in report form to the survey participants, the Community Needs Assessment Survey, and subsequently this report, was divided into two independent parts: Part I--Report of the Community Leaders Segment of the Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment Survey; and Part II--Report of the High School Principals and Counselors Segment of the Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment Survey. Separate survey instruments were developed for the two subpopulations. Even though many of the dimensions of the College being assessed were included on both survey instruments, each also included items that seemed especially pertinent to the particular subpopulation. It is not surprising that there was a great deal of similarity in responses to items common to both groups; yet the concerns of their own subpopulation are evident, and the more focused information requested of one group but not the other did elicit meaningful data which will be valuable to the College.

Due to monetary and temporal constraints, it was determined that for both segments of the study, "community" would be defined as Hall, Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and Gwinnett (north half, including Lawrenceville, Buford, and Sugar Hill) Counties. Approximately three-fourths of the College's students live within this area delineated as "community."

The study was planned and executed by the Gainesville College Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Special assistance was provided by two persons: Dr. Harold L. Nix, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, University of Georgia, served as external consultant throughout the study; and Diane Carpenter, Senior Secretary, Office Of Planning and Institutional Research, performed numerous valuable secretarial roles in the execution of the survey process and in the preparation of this report.

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PART I

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERS SEGMENT
OF THE
GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

FALL 1990

Office of Planning and Institutional Research
Gainesville College
Gainesville, Georgia 30503

PART I

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERS SEGMENT OF THE GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Fall, 1990

I. PURPOSE OF STUDY

This report concerns the community leaders segment of the Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment Survey conducted in November, 1990. The general goal of this segment of the survey was threefold: (1) to obtain an evaluation and feedback from the College's community concerning the ongoing programs, services, personnel, relationships, and facilities of the College; (2) to identify felt educational needs the community has which Gainesville College might meet and services it might offer; and (3) to heighten an awareness of and interest in Gainesville College. It is believed that the insights provided by the leaders selected for this study, combined with the other available institutional data, give an adequately accurate, general picture of Gainesville College's current situation and provide meaningful data for use by the College as it continues its efforts to do sound planning and to further improve its programs and services.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Community Reconnaissance Method

This community study utilized a modification of a research method of data collection known as the "community reconnaissance method." The method provides a quick, efficient technique for gathering data concerning the community by using a sample of community leaders as the informants. While it cannot be assumed that the views of the leaders who participate in a community reconnaissance study provide a comprehensive community perspective, the method does involve an effort to include respondents representative of the numerous types and levels of community groups. It should be noted, however, that even though views of groups typically underrepresented (such as minorities, females, and lower socioeconomic groups) are included in the data gathered, the views of these groups are reflected only to the extent that the leader respondents who represent the people of these groups could and do communicate the views of the groups. In spite of this possible pitfall of the method, the leadership approach to gaining data concerning the community has proven to be an economical, quick technique for gathering broad, general information useful for planning purposes.

B. Definition of "Community"

Ideally, a Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment would include feedback from all areas from which the College typically draws its students. However, financial and temporal limitations necessitated a compromise in the definition of the College's "community" for the purposes of this survey. It was decided that for this study "community" would be defined to include Hall, Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and Gwinnett (north half, including Lawrenceville, Buford, and Sugar Hill) Counties. Approximately three-fourths of the College's students live within this five-county "community"; and also, the "community" so defined is adequately representative of the total area from which the College typically draws its students.

C. Selection of Leader Sample

Two methods commonly used for identification of community leaders were used. By using this combination of techniques, it is believed that an adequate sample of both general and specialized leaders who serve to represent the general population of the community is tapped to participate in the survey.

Panel Nomination Method. The first technique used for delineating leaders is called the panel nomination method whereby a broadly representative and knowledgeable group is selected to serve as a panel to fill out nomination questionnaires (Appendix I-A). The Gainesville College Foundation Board of Trustees served in this capacity. A letter from the College President (Appendix I-B) was mailed to each trustee along with a nomination questionnaire; and a follow-up letter was sent three weeks later

(Appendix I-C). The trustees were asked to name four persons from each of the five counties in the College's "community" (Hall, Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, north part of Gwinnett) whom they consider to be most influential in general community affairs. In addition, they were asked to name people considered to be the most influential leaders in fifteen specialized categories for each of the five counties being used in the study. The fifteen specialized areas were: business/industry/banking, education, political, health and medicine, cultural affairs, welfare and social services, civic affairs, religion, women, labor and working class, minorities, communication, recreation, agriculture, and law and law enforcement. Panel members were directed to mail their nominations for tallying to a University of Georgia Research Consultant who worked with the College in executing the study. It was determined that those mentioned two or more times would become part of the leader pool from which the sample would be determined.

Positional Method. The second technique utilized to delineate community leaders is called the positional method. This approach involves preparing a list of top positional leaders from available official documents, and selecting from this list persons who occupy key positions in designated areas such as government, business and industry, civic and cultural affairs, education, law, agriculture, recreation, religion, communications, etc.

Due to the time and financial constraints that existed, it was predetermined that a total of approximately 100 community persons should be surveyed, about one-half from Hall County and the other half from the area counties of Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham and the

north part of Gwinnett. Slightly different approaches were used in the development of the potential respondent lists for Hall than for the area counties. Potential Hall County respondents were selected by combining the list of persons nominated by the panel two or more times with a positional list. By eliminating overlap and assuring adequate leader representation in the specialized categories and typically underrepresented groups (minorities, women, etc.), a list of 59 potential respondents from Hall County resulted. As it turned out, all who emerged on the final list had also received at least two nominations by the panel.

More respondents in the area counties than in Hall County were selected on a positional basis, although all individuals listed two or more times by the nominating panel were included in the sample. In order to provide some consistency in the process and to assure representation of the typically underrepresented groups, it was decided that at least one individual would be surveyed in each of the area counties who occupies a position in each of the following areas: political; education; communications; women; business/industry/banking; cultural affairs; civic affairs (Chamber of Commerce); religion, law/law enforcement; and minorities, where relevant. Again, where possible, panel nominations were used in the selection of respondents to represent these areas. A total of 53 persons was identified in the area counties as potential respondents: 13 from Barrow County; 14 from Forsyth County; 12 from Habersham County; and 14 from the northern part of Gwinnett County.

A list of 112 potential respondents ultimately was prepared by the University of Georgia Research Consultant with Gainesville

College's Coordinator of Assessment. Ninety (80 percent) of these subsequently participated in the survey: 49 respondents were from Hall County, 12 from Forsyth County, 10 from Barrow County, 10 from Habersham County, and 9 from the north part of Gwinnett County.

D. Characteristics of Respondents

What sorts of persons were the 90 who participated in the survey? Table I summarizes the respondents according to selected characteristics. Nearly one-half of the respondents were 25-34 years of age, and another one-third were in the 35-49 year-old range; i.e., over three-fourths of the leader respondents indicated they were 25-49 years old. Seventy-five percent of the respondents were male and one-fourth were female. The respondents were well educated. Over three-fourths had obtained at least one college degree, and another 14 percent had some college experience. In terms of primary occupation, slightly more than one-fourth of the leader respondents had an occupation in the business/industry/banking/agriculture sector. Nearly 15% worked in education, 12% were lawyers or in law enforcement, 10% in communications (mass media), 8% in religious-type work, and over 5% in health or medicine. The primary occupation of less than 5% of the respondents was of a political nature (4.5%), in a social service agency (4.5%), or in recreation (3.4%). The remaining 10% of the respondents worked in a variety of other occupational areas.

TABLE I. CHARACTERISTICS OF 90 LEADER RESPONDENTS IN HALL,
BARROW, FORSYTH, HABERSHAM AND NORTH PART
OF GWINNETT COUNTIES

FALL 1990

CHARACTERISTIC		PERCENT
AGE:	Less than 25 years	6.7
	25-34 years	44.4
	35-49 years	34.4
	50-62 years	13.3
	Over 62 years	1.1
SEX:	Female	24.7
	Male	75.3
EDUCATION:	High School	7.8
	Some College	14.4
	College Degree(s)	77.8
PRINCIPAL		
OCCUPATION:	Business/Industry/Banking (including Agriculture)	26.1
	Education	14.8
	Law/Law Enforcement	12.5
	Communications (Mass Media)	10.2
	Religion	8.0
	Health/Medicine	5.7
	Political	4.5
	Social Services	4.5
	Recreation	3.4
	Other	10.2

E. Survey Instrument Construction

The final survey instrument (Appendix I-D) was constructed by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research staff in consultation with the University of Georgia Research Consultant. Input was received from faculty, administrators, and staff during the questionnaire's development process. The instrument used in the College's 1980 Community Needs Assessment served as a model for the development of the 1990 instrument. Most of the same dimensions were used, although the questionnaire items were modified slightly and updated to better reflect the College today; and several new items were added.

Dimensions of the College that were to be studied from the community perspective included:

1. Attitudes and evaluations of the College--its image, programs (academic and nonacademic), services, personnel, relationships, facilities, extraclass experiences, cultural activities, and quality of education received at Gainesville College by its graduates
2. Felt educational needs in the community which the College can/should meet, and the services it should offer
3. College relationships--College with the community in general, area postsecondary institutions, area high schools; and College faculty, administrators, and students with the community.

F. Data Collection Procedure

Interviews were scheduled over a two-week period of time, three days each week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday). Two days were allotted for data collection in Hall County, and one day for each of the area counties.

In preparation for the interviewing, the College President sent a personal letter (Appendix I-E) informing each potential respondent of the nature of the study and the planned procedure. Appointment calls followed shortly. During this period, two potential respondents declined to participate, leaving a pool of 110 potential respondents. The Hall County interviews were held in the Chestatee Regional Library in downtown Gainesville. The following locations were used in the area counties: Barrow County--Conference area of the Chamber of Commerce Building in Winder; Forsyth County--Community Room in the County Courthouse in Cumming; Habersham County--Habersham Bank Community Room in Cornelia; Gwinnett County--Conference Room in Gwinnett Area Technical Institute near Lawrenceville and a Sunday School Classroom in the First United Methodist Church in Buford.

During most of the data-gathering sessions, a two-person team administered the questionnaires. Staff from the Gainesville College Office of Planning and Institutional Research and the University of Georgia Research Consultant participated as team members.

A "modified group interview" approach was taken to gather the data. Appointment times for the group interviews were preset (the number of times varied with each area), and each respondent was

allowed to choose the time that suited best. As many as 12 persons and as few as one person were scheduled for a given time period. As the respondents came to the interview, a brief face-to-face introduction to the study and overview of the study and the questionnaire were given. During the introductory comments the respondents were encouraged to ask for any clarification needed as they responded to the questionnaire items. Only three persons asked for any assistance. Respondents then completed their questionnaire at large tables provided, and at their own pace. Completed questionnaires were deposited anonymously in a designated box as the respondents departed.

Leaders who were unable to attend one of the scheduled interview sessions were given the option of completing the questionnaire in their own setting, and mailing it to the College's Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Where possible, questionnaires were hand delivered to these persons; others were mailed. Of the 110 leaders who had agreed to participate in the survey, 72 personally participated in an interview session and questionnaires were mailed or delivered to the remaining 38. A follow-up letter from the President was sent (Appendix I-F) to those who had received a mailed or delivered questionnaire, unless it was known that they had already returned their questionnaire. Of those mailed or delivered, 18 were completed and returned to the College.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

In this section an analysis is made of the responses given to the various questionnaire items. The order that the data are presented below generally reflect the sequence of the questionnaire items. An analysis of the responses given to the open-ended general College image/evaluation items is presented first. Second, the feedback provided by the respondents on College programs is analyzed, followed by an analysis of ratings made of College programs, services, personnel, relationships, and quality of Gainesville College education of Gainesville College graduates. Finally, a summary of the responses given to the items related to respondent contacts with the College, and an analysis of the additional comments are presented. In the "Summary and Conclusions" section which follows this Data Analysis section, the data are viewed from a broader, more comprehensive perspective.

A. General College Image/Evaluation

An awareness of the image that a college has in its community is crucial for understanding and planning for any college, but especially for a public institution which has as part of its stated mission that it is to serve the needs of the community in which it is located. How does Gainesville College's community see the College? What are the College's strong points? How could the College improve? Is the College doing what its community thinks it should be doing? A descriptive analysis of these dimensions as seen through the eyes of the sample of 90 community leaders follows. Once again, it should be noted that while an effort was made for the leaders to be representative of all sectors of the

community, the views expressed by the respondents are of necessity colored by the positions the respondents hold. It is believed, however, that the information provided by the leaders' responses does give the needed general picture of Gainesville College within its current community context.

Gainesville College's Strongest Points. The questionnaire item that focused on what the respondents "consider to be the College's STRONGEST points" elicited a total of 271 responses. Seven respondents indicated they did not know enough about the College to respond, or they left the space blank. The responses given were combined where it seemed logical, tabulated, and organized into five broad, general categories: (1) services/programs (academic, personal growth, continuing education/public service, non-academic); (2) relationships (to the community, with other educational institutions, and intracampus); (3) facilities; (4) personnel (faculty/staff, administrators, other); and (5) miscellaneous comments (comments which could not be categorized logically into one of the preceding categories). The responses to the question concerning Gainesville College's strongest points are summarized, tabulated, and categorized in Tables II, III, and IV. It should be noted that the process of combining and categorizing written questionnaire comments is always a highly subjective process, and does impact data interpretation. Nevertheless, this process provides a systematic way to focus on data from such open-ended questions as used in this study.

In Table II the rank order of Gainesville College's strongest points by the five general categories listed above is given. Also, tallies of subcategories of each general category are provided. Over one-fourth of the comments concerned positive aspects of the College's services and programs, with the majority of the comments focusing on academic programs. Another one-fourth were related to the College's good relationships both on and off campus. The positive relationship with the community is noteworthy--50 of the 90 respondents included some reference to the College's relationship with the community as being one of the institution's strongest points. Fifty-eight respondents indicated that they perceive the facilities, especially the College's location, as one of Gainesville College's strongest points, and 47 commented about various personnel being an asset to the College.

The data in Table III are a breakdown of the general categories used in Table II into subcategories and specific (many combined) comments made by the respondents. Data in Table IV draw from Table III and delineate the top ten specific strongest points in rank order according to the number of times mentioned. The College's location was mentioned most often as a strong point. General comments about academic program quality were made second most often, and statements concerning the quality of the faculty/staff were made third most often. Following as strong points of the College were cost, responsiveness to the community, educational opportunities, community/civic involvement, administrators, Gainesville College's physical plant, and Continuing Education/Public Service.

TABLE II. RANK ORDER OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S STRONGEST POINTS BY
GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY AS INDICATED BY A SAMPLE
OF 90 COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

RANK	GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Programs/Services Academic: 42 Personal Growth: 14 Continuing Education/ Public Service: 10 Nonacademic: 4	70
2	Relationships Community: 50 Other Educational Institutions: 12 Intracampus: 5	67
3	Facilities Location: 42 Physical Plant: 11 Availability: 5	58
4	Personnel Faculty/Staff: 33 Administration: 12 Other: 2	47
5	Miscellaneous Cost: 18 Size: 5 Environment: 4 Other: 2	29
TOTAL COMMENTS ON STRONGEST POINTS:		271

TABLE III. GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS BY
GENERAL CATEGORY AS INDICATED BY A SAMPLE OF 90
COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
I. PROGRAMS/SERVICES (Total Comments: 70)	
A. Academic Programs/Services (Subtotal: 42)	
1. Academic Program Quality (general): broad, comprehensive, diverse, strong curriculum; instructional quality; high quality educa- tional opportunities; sound educational credentials, offerings, academic reputation; high academic achievement; core curriculum	35
2. Career programs: excellent two-year career programs; preparation of youth for jobs	3
3. Evening programs: broad selection available	2
4. Developmental Studies Program: good prepara- tion for marginal students	2
B. Personal Growth (Subtotal: 14)	
1. Educational opportunities: opportunities available to all levels to receive higher education; liberal admissions policy; being a "community college"; ability to help people to begin college education, meet educational objectives, serve first generation college students	13
2. Other: good academic, social activity mix	1
C. Continuing Education/Public Service (Subtotal: 10)	
1. Adult education programs; public service; professional development, real estate courses	10
D. Nonacademic Services (Subtotal: 4)	
1. Regional theater, drama/theater emphasis	2
2. Other: Foundation; minority recruitment	2

TABLE III (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
II. RELATIONSHIPS (Total Comments: 67)	
A. Community Relationships (Subtotal: 50)	
1. Responsiveness to community: coordinates program with community; community support services; ability to seek and meet community needs; deals with whole community; growing with community; feeling of community; supports business/industrial community--an asset in attracting new industry	16
2. Community/Civic involvement: Faculty, leadership involved; strong/active civic involvement	12
3. Positive image/reputation: respect in community; good image (professional); regional appeal	9
4. Public relations: good PR, well advertised, strong presence, visible in community; ability to reach out with good communication	6
5. Orientation: community oriented; local focus	5
6. Other: Economic impact on community; input into cultural community	2
B. Other Educational Institutions (Subtotal: 12)	
1. Programs with other institutions: 4-year with North Georgia College; joint programs; career ladder; willingness to support joint efforts; cooperation with Brenau, Lanier Tech	7
2. Transferability of courses; a State institution	5
C. Intracampus Relationships (Subtotal: 5)	
1. Personal involvement/attention given students; faculty concern of students, willingness to help students	5

TABLE III (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
--	------------------------

III. FACILITIES (Total Comments: 58)

- | | |
|--|----|
| A. Location (Subtotal: 42) | |
| 1. Accessibility, closeness; proximity to I-985, outlying counties | 42 |
| B. Physical Plant (Subtotal: 11) | |
| 1. Buildings good, attractive; neat/clean campus | 11 |
| C. Availability (Subtotal: 5) | |
| 1. Availability of facilities to community | 5 |

IV. PERSONNEL (Total Comments: 47)

- | | |
|--|----|
| A. Faculty/Staff (Subtotal: 33) | |
| 1. Strong/excellent/outstanding/qualified/dedicated/above average/well-known faculty; high standards of teaching staff | 33 |
| B. Administrators (Subtotal: 12) | |
| 1. College president projects strong favorable image; good, well-managed leadership; strong administrative structure; open, community oriented | 12 |
| C. Other (Subtotal: 2) | |
| 1. Students display true interest in education; alumni | 2 |

TABLE III (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
V. MISCELLANEOUS (Total Comments: 29)	
A. Cost (Subtotal: 18) 1. low; affordable	18
B. Size (Subtotal: 5) 1. small size	5
C. Environment (Subtotal: 4) 1. attractive academic/learning environment; environment above average; best in Gainesville; good place to learn	4
D. Other (Subtotal: 2) 1. commitment to excellence; tackles issues of importance	2
TOTAL SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS COMMENTS	271

TABLE IV. RANK ORDER OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S TOP 10 SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS AS INDICATED BY A SAMPLE OF 90 COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

RANK	SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Location	42
2	Academic program quality (general)	35
3	Faculty/Staff	33
4	Cost	18
5	Responsiveness to community	16
6	Educational opportunities	13
7	Community/Civic involvement	12
7	Administrators	12
9	Physical Plant	11
10	Continuing Education/Public Service	10

Ways Gainesville College Could Improve. There were 153 responses given to the open-ended question, "What are some ways you think Gainesville College could improve?" The responses to this item are summarized in Tables V, VI, and VII.

In Table V the responses are grouped into the same broad, general categories and subcategories as were the responses to the item concerning Gainesville College's strongest points. There were 105 specific suggestions of ways Gainesville College could improve its programs and services, 49 of which concerned academic programs/services and 42 which focused on nonacademic services.

Twenty-two of the comments concerned needed improvements in relationships and nineteen comments focused on facilities. There were five personnel-related suggestions for improvements. It is significant that 19 of the 91 respondents (21 percent) gave either a "Don't Know" response or made no response at all, possibly indicating either a lack of much in-depth familiarity with the College and its activities, or a high level of satisfaction.

The specific-improvement comments delineated in Table VI are categorized by the same five broad, general categories used in Table V. It should be noted that overall, the majority of the comments are suggestions that the College expand its programs, services, facilities or relationships in some way or other. A much smaller number of respondents suggested that the College needs to improve or strengthen its programs or service.

In Table VII the six specific ways to improve that were mentioned most often by the respondents are presented in rank order. A need to improve the College's efforts in public relations and increase its visibility was mentioned most frequently, with 19 persons indicating such a need. The need for expansion mentioned in the preceding paragraph is reinforced in the data presented in this table. Three of the top six suggestions were related to expansion--expansion of academic offerings beyond the two-year level, expansion of courses and programs in general, and expansion of continuing education offerings and public services. Ten persons suggested that the College make available some sort of student housing; and nine respondents felt the College should be involved in some type of intercollegiate athletics.

TABLE V. RANK ORDER OF WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD IMPROVE
BY GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY AS INDICATED BY A
SAMPLE OF 90 COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

RANK	WAYS TO IMPROVE GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Programs/Services Academic: 49 Nonacademic: 42 Continuing Education: 13 Personal Growth: 1	105
2	Relationships Other Educational Institutions: 13 Community: 9	22
3	Facilities Housing: 10 Buildings: 6 Parking: 2 Grounds: 1	19
4	Personnel Faculty: 5	5
5	Miscellaneous	<u>2</u>
	TOTAL COMMENTS ON WAYS TO IMPROVE	153

TABLE VI. SPECIFIC WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD IMPROVE BY
GENERAL CATEGORY AS INDICATED BY A SAMPLE OF 90
COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
I. PROGRAMS/SERVICES (Total Comments: 105)	
A. Academic Programs/Services (Subtotal: 49)	
1. Expansion	
a. Beyond two-year: expand to four-year degree program; develop some baccalaureate-level courses; offer Masters-level courses on week-ends; get UGA bachelors/masters courses offered quarterly; don't push to be four-year	15
b. Programs/courses (general): expand courses/curriculum, offer more courses for specific careers; offer college courses to high school seniors; be assertive in developing programs that meet needs identified in this assessment; courses directed to minorities	12
c. Programs/courses (specific): offer more courses in health careers, business careers; have recreation program of study, course in Japanese language/culture; expand media preparedness courses; add more to curriculum by using more community professionals to teach	6
d. Availability: provide week-end classes that meet needs of non-trationals; classes in various communities, in high schools; more convenient scheduling of some courses; reach out to minorities with programs directed toward them; offer additional courses when classes full	5
2. Course/program improvements: strengthen commitment to cultural arts program; stronger liberal arts program; more demanding course requirements; be sure grads fully grounded in fundamentals, have hands-on experience, prepared to enter workforce	6
3. Instruction/student support: improve instructional quality; offer better after-class help; teach without prejudices	5

TABLE VI (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
B. Nonacademic Services (Subtotal: 42)	
1. Public relations/visibility: increase/broaden/ improve visibility/public relations; increase media exposure; inform public of college personnel, activities, opportunities; promote College offerings, strengths; stress College mission; inform potential non-traditional students how can attend; stress transfer- ability; inform, increase awareness of older/ retired persons; update/improve mailing list; strengthen image as two-year school	19
2. Intercollegiate athletics: become involved in basketball, baseball; reestablish competitive athletic program, use to generate spirit, support	9
3. Recruitment: continue to recruit/attract/ retain minorities; enhance recruitment efforts/target students who would benefit from attending; recruit Forsyth on yearly basis	6
4. Financial aid: increase/expand scholarships; increase awareness of available assistance	3
5. Cultural enrichment: offer more cultural opportunities (lectures/concerts); continue to bring in guest speakers	2
6. Transportation: contract with city government for student transportation; some can't attend because of lack of transportation	2
7. Other: continue needs assessment; Lanier Tech/ Gainesville College contract with city government for student transportation (Dial-A-Ride)	1
C. Continuing Education/Public Service (Subtotal: 13)	
1. Expansion: offer more workshops for those working; professional development courses; expand community-based programs, adult/post-graduate courses; more Quick-Start programs; broaden retired/elderly programs (week-end programs/computer programs); serve as alternative school for high school drop-outs, work harder on illiteracy; identify and meet needs of paraprofessionals, unskilled workers	12

TABLE VI (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
2. Program/Service Changes: reduce seminar cost	1
D. Personal Growth	
1. Require students attend cultural events	1
II. RELATIONSHIPS (Total Comments: 22)	
A. Other Educational Institutions (Subtotal: 13)	
1. Public schools: closer relationships with high schools, high school counselors; better coordination; coordinate services with boards of education	6
2. Technical schools: better coordination, work closer with Lanier Tech, all technical schools; address needs of industry with technical schools	5
3. Colleges/universities: Avoid duplication of classes, competition for same clientele (NGC, Brenau); clarify service areas, roles/responsibilities of System institutions in Gwinnett	2
B. Community (Subtotal: 9)	
1. Involvement (general): increase student involvement; get faculty expertise into total community; increase involvement outside Hall County	4
2. Involvement (specific): coordinate community education activities; work with social agencies; actively provide advice to elected/appointed officials; work closely with local papers in sponsorship of academic pursuits, writing seminars, speakers, etc.	4
3. Responsiveness to community: increase awareness of needs of low-income groups	1

TABLE VI (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
III. FACILITIES (Total Comments: 19)	
A. Student Housing: provide dorms, on-site residential facilities	10
B. Buildings: expand classrooms/buildings; upgrade; enlarge library, reference area; redo student lounge, dining area	6
C. Parking	2
D. Grounds Appearance: keep neat/orderly as have in past	1
IV. PERSONNEL (Total Comments: 5)	
A. Faculty: expand; recruit/attract faculty who encourage, inspire, motivate; add minorities; use advisors with interest in students	5
V. MISCELLANEOUS (Total Comments: 2)	
A. Miscellaneous: continue to offer educational opportunities at cost less than private schools; minimize emphasis placed on rank	<u>2</u>
TOTAL COMMENTS ON WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD IMPROVE	153

TABLE VII. RANK ORDER OF THE TOP SIX SPECIFIC WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD IMPROVE AS INDICATED BY A SAMPLE OF 90 COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

RANK	SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Public Relations/Visibility	19
2	Expansion beyond two-year academic programs	15
3	Expansion of academic programs/ courses (general)	12
3	Expansion of Continuing Education/ Public Service courses/programs/ services	12
5	Student Housing	10
6	Intercollegiate Athletics	9

B. College Programs

The respondents were asked a series of questions which focused on course and program offerings. One set of questions was related to the broad, general types of programs currently offered by the College. A second set of questions solicited feedback on courses, programs, and services which the College should offer, but is not currently offering in the academic, continuing education, and public service areas. A third set of questions was designed to explore course and/or program offerings in the specific areas of high technology and foreign languages. A discussion of the leader responses to each of these programmatic questions follows.

General Programs. The four general types of programs currently offered by Gainesville College (College Transfer, Two-Year Career, Developmental Studies, Continuing Education/Public Service) were briefly described on the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they were aware, before the interview, of each program; then to indicate the degree of importance they thought Gainesville College should place on the program over the next decade. The percentage of respondents who indicated an awareness of the four types of programs currently offered by the College is shown in Table VIII. As these data indicate, a high percentage of the leaders who responded to these items were aware of the College's programs. Of the four program areas, the leaders were most familiar with the College's Transfer Programs and least familiar with the Developmental Studies Program.

TABLE VIII. PERCENTAGE OF 90 COMMUNITY LEADER RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED AN AWARENESS OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S FOUR GENERAL PROGRAMS

FALL 1990

GENERAL PROGRAM	AWARE OF PROGRAM (%)
College Transfer Programs	93
Two-Year Career Programs	88
Developmental Studies Program	70
Continuing Education/Public Service Programs	82

When asked to indicate the degree of importance that Gainesville College should place on a program over the next decade, nearly all of the leaders who responded to this question indicated that the College should consider all four of the programs as important or very important. But, relatively speaking, a greater percentage of the leaders (over 80 percent) felt the College Transfer and Two-Year Career Programs should be considered as "Very Important" than they did the Developmental Studies Program or the Continuing Education/Public Service Programs (66 and 53 percent, respectively). The data in Table IX detail the percentages of these responses.

TABLE IX. DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE GAINESVILLE COLLEGE SHOULD PLACE
ON THE FOUR GENERAL PROGRAMS OVER THE NEXT DECADE AS
INDICATED BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

PROGRAM	DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE ¹		
	Very Important (%)	Important (%)	Not Important (%)
College Transfer Programs	82	17	1
Two-Year Career Programs	81	18	1
Developmental Studies Program	66	34	0
Continuing Education/ Public Service Programs	53	46	1

¹Percentages do not include "Don't Know" responses or those who did not respond. Three respondents gave "Don't Know" responses for the College Transfer Programs item, two to the Two-Year Career Programs item, four to the Developmental Studies Program item, and one to the Continuing Education/Public Service Programs item.

Academic offerings, Continuing Education Offerings, and Public Service Functions. The respondents were first asked to list specific program/course suggestions concerning academic offerings, then to describe continuing education offerings needed, and finally to respond to a public service question regarding facility use. Responses to each of these questionnaire items are summarized below.

Academic Offerings. When the respondents were asked if there are any specific ACADEMIC courses or programs not currently offered that they, the organization/business they represent, or people they come in contact with think Gainesville College should offer for academic credit, 68 percent of the leaders indicated they "Don't Know," and 20 percent marked, "No." The courses/programs suggested by the remaining 12 percent of the leaders who responded that there are courses or programs not currently offered which the college should offer for academic credit are listed in Table X. In reality, at least half of the courses/programs suggested already are being offered by the College. Nevertheless, each suggestion given is categorized by the academic division or department of the College which would likely be able to meet the need suggested. There is little unanimity in the suggestions, but this is not surprising since such suggestions are generally given from a personal perspective, as would be expected.

TABLE X. COURSES/PROGRAMS NOT CURRENTLY OFFERED THAT GAINESVILLE COLLEGE SHOULD OFFER FOR ACADEMIC CREDIT AS LISTED BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

ACADEMIC AREA	COURSE/PROGRAM ¹
Business-Related	Business Management Marketing Theory Accounting Life Economic Systems (families and requirements for business/family living)
Math-Science	Computer/Computer Sciences (2) Computer mapping-geographical information
Social Sciences	Anthropology World Affairs (Islamic religion/ Far Eastern Culture)
Humanities	Art/Art Appreciation Language (Latin, Japanese, other foreign languages needed for international market place) (2) Advanced English Journalism and Photography Program
Physical Education	Health Sciences Leisure Career Courses/Recreation
Other	Fundamentals Alternative High School Credit

¹The numbers in parenthesis refer to the number of respondents who gave the suggestion.

Continuing Education Offerings. The leaders were then asked if there are any specific kinds of training, knowledge, or skills that they, the organization/business they represent, or people they come in contact with think the College should offer in the form of training courses, workshops, or seminars for which there would be CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT given, but not academic credit. Nearly one-half (48 percent) responded "Yes" to this question and provided numerous suggestions. Twenty percent responded "No" to this question also, and 32 percent marked they "Don't Know." The suggestions given by the respondents are listed in Table XI, and also are categorized by Gainesville College's academic division which is most likely to assist the Continuing Education/Public Service Office in responding to the suggestion.

TABLE XI. SPECIFIC KINDS OF TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE, OR SKILLS WHICH GAINESVILLE COLLEGE SHOULD OFFER IN THE FORM OF TRAINING COURSES, WORKSHOPS, OR SEMINARS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT AS SUGGESTED BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

ACADEMIC AREA	TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS ¹
Business	Marketing Developing a marketing plan Sales training Typing Telephone usage for receptionists Basic job skills (interviewing, etc.) Fund raising for non-profit organizations Personal finances Financial planning Management--current philosophy, leadership development/skills (8) Manager/employee relations (2) High-tech-type training; exploring innovative technology (2) Computer operations/systems (3) Word processing programs Legal Secretary (beyond Certified Legal Assistant) Paralegal courses Institute of Continuing Legal Education Seminars for attorneys Taxes: state/federal License courses Insurance County/city administration training Continuing education for business/agencies/professions (2) Business orientation and effects on U.S. economy--personal and family Impact of business/professions on area Impact of agriculture/agribusiness on area

¹The numbers in parenthesis refer to the number of respondents who gave the suggestion.

TABLE XI (CONTINUED)

ACADEMIC AREA	TRAINING, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS ¹
Social Sciences	Gerontology Criminal Justice/Law enforcement training/personal officer training (4) Mental Health Continuing education for teachers; teachers' aides (3) Age-group information--aging, etc. Non-sectarian religion Marriage/family relationships; parenting (2) Volunteerism/community involvement (3) Courses to enhance knowledge of agency/government officials; how local governments work/political process: role of citizens in government (4) Minorities
Science/Mathematics	Environmental programs (3) Continuing education for nurses Health delivery services courses Firemen--classroom training
Humanities	Language (Spanish, English as a Second Language) (3) Writing courses: general, business, civic group press releases, advanced grammar refresher for business (4) Effective communication; interpersonal/people skills (2) Public Relations Public speaking (2) Photography Broadcasting (TV/radio)
Physical Education	Leisure-type recreation programs

¹The numbers in parenthesis refer to the number of respondents who gave the suggestion.

Public Service Functions. Respondents were informed that due to budget constraints, it is anticipated that in the future the use of College facilities for Public Service functions (non-College related meetings/activities) will have to operate on a "break-even" fee basis. They were then asked to indicate whether or not they thought this will reduce significantly the use of the College facilities for these purposes. Feedback on an issue such as this is important to the College since it is a public, state-funded institution. The College is committed to playing a public service role, yet necessarily must operate in a fiscally responsible manner to fulfill its primary mission in the best, most efficient manner possible. Over one-half of the respondents (56 percent) indicated that they believe the use of College facilities will not be reduced significantly, yet 27 percent felt facility use would be significantly reduced. Eighteen percent gave a "Don't Know" response.

Forty-one leaders wrote comments concerning the possible effect of charging for facility use for public services functions. The comments are summarized in a general way in Table XII. Those indicating that facility use will not be reduced significantly generally felt that "break-even" charges are expected by most users; also, they felt that facility use will not be affected significantly as long as the College provides good service and keeps the fees reasonable. Several positive comments were made about the quality and accessibility of the facilities. Some of those who indicated that facility use will be decreased commented that a reduction in use should be expected, and others wrote that

allowing the facilities to be used by the public serves as a good public relations tool, and the cost of such a service should be born by the institution. Those who wrote comments along with their "Don't Know" response generally felt unknown factors were likely to affect facility use, so they were unable to predict whether or not facility use would be affected.

TABLE XII. PERCEPTIONS AND COMMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEADERS CONCERNING THE EFFECT ON FACILITY USE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE FUNCTIONS IF OPERATED ON A "BREAK-EVEN" FEE BASIS

FALL 1990

FACILITY USE REDUCED SIGNIFICANTLY?	NUMBER	(%)	COMMENT SUMMARY	NO. MAKING COMMENTS
No	50	(56)	"Break even" charge is expected, logical; keep fees reasonable, low as can and services good; facility/equipment good; there is easy access; most are willing to pay	25
Yes	24	(27)	Use reduction should be expected; is a valuable function of College, good PR, and service should be provided; reduction will occur unless support increases; depends on how costs allocated; availability is appreciated and people used to using facilities	12
Don't Know	16	(18)	Depends on fees, other facilities available; consider facilities as good-will tool; business may not be affected, but non-profit organizations may be affected	4
TOTALS	90	(101) ¹		41

¹Total percentage is over 100 percent due to rounding effect

Potential Course/Program Areas. The respondents were asked to give the College their perceptions concerning the advisability of expansion in two general program areas--high technology and foreign language. An analysis of their responses concerning each of these program areas follows.

High Technology. The questionnaire item which solicited input from the leader respondents concerning the possibility of the College getting more involved in high technology education was stated: "As you know, high technology, particularly computer-based operations, is being integrated increasingly into banking, business, industry, and service agency operations. Are there ways that the College might get more involved in providing educational assistance to these sectors of the community as they continue their movement into high technology?" Only one respondent replied, "No," and almost one-third (30%) responded, "Don't Know." The remaining two-thirds (69%) indicated that the College should get more involved in providing high-tech educational assistance, and gave 65 suggestions of ways that the College might get more involved. The suggestions were tallied, then similar comments combined by general approaches that the College might take to respond to high-tech educational needs. The results of the comment analysis are given in Table XIII. Over two-thirds of the suggestions concerned some sort of continuing education assistance (programs/courses with no academic credit given) either on campus or off campus in the workplace, and slightly less than one-third were related to academic courses or programs.

TABLE XIII. WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE MIGHT GET MORE INVOLVED IN PROVIDING HIGH TECHNOLOGY EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THE BANKING, BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND SERVICE AGENCY SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY AS SUGGESTED BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

GENERAL APPROACHES	COMMENTS	NO. COMMENTS
1. Continuing Education for business/industry in use of computers	Provide seminars/workshops/classes/training for employees/managers/professionals: more basic courses (Lotus), small classes to meet specific needs; all level courses; seminar on high tech developments; strong training for diverse development of high tech skills; night classes after work hours, during work hours; brief seminars with "hands-on" learning; introductory courses in PC use and programs used by most businesses; program regarding latest information available on "World Class Manufacturing"	19
2. Other Continuing Education Programs	Provide seminars/workshops/classes/training/updating/upgrading for: churches; older persons, individuals, farmers, those who graduated before computers (summer school, night school, newsletter), high school seniors, public school students (gifted summer program)	9
3. Off-Campus Programs	Provide training/workshops/on-job-training in the workplace: Teach on their machines/assist with OJT; have instructor available to give assistance/information regarding equipment/computer usage; contract with high tech companies to give assistance/training; offer workshops in businesses/industries at small cost	9

TABLE XIII (CONTINUED)

GENERAL APPROACHES	COMMENTS	NO. COMMENTS
4. Cooperative programs with business/industry	Develop Partnership Program to place/train students; have non-paid interns for academic credit; give hands-on experience at local businesses, field trips to see computer usage; provide interns for public & private businesses where students can get OJT	8
5. Academic Programs	Teach basic theory in high tech fields, some application courses in high tech and service industry programs; integrate technology into all aspects of instructional program; prepare students to be literate in several types of programs--teach Unix systems vs. DOS; College keep current with changing computer activities; keep equipment updated to produce well-trained students; teach computer programming; offer wide range of courses	8
6. Software	Provide accounting packages for nonprofit organizations, box office software (how to design), package programs to fit particular fields	3
7. Cooperation with other Institutions	Work with North Georgia Tech for joint program; cooperate with Gwinnett Tech	2
8. Miscellaneous	Poll businesses/agencies/ community, work with Chamber of Commerce to determine needs, then respond; encourage females/minorities to enroll in high tech programs, perhaps give scholarships; serve as general information source and provide "catch-up" training	7

Foreign Language. With an increasing number of foreign-based firms and individuals from other countries coming into the College's community, and many businesses reaching into the international market, there has been an increased demand for training and expertise in foreign languages. As a part of the College's commitment to respond to community educational needs, the leaders were asked to give their perceptions of how important they thought it is that the College get involved, when requested, in providing foreign language education to three different sets of clientele: the banking, business, and industry sectors of the community; agencies that provide assistance to persons for whom English is their second language (law enforcement, medical, social service agencies, etc.); and individuals currently employed in the area for whom English is their second language. Leader responses are presented in Table XIV. While over 90 percent of respondents considered all three types of involvement to be "Important" or "Very Important," there was stronger felt need (more considered it "Very Important") to be involved in offering training for and providing expertise to agencies that provide assistance to persons for whom English is their second language, and in helping to improve the English of persons currently employed in the area for whom English is their second language, than to be involved in offering training for and providing expertise to the banking, business, and industry sectors of the community to enable their employees to communicate with their Hispanic clientele.

TABLE XIV. THE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE THAT GAINESVILLE COLLEGE SHOULD GET INVOLVED, WHEN REQUESTED, IN EXPANDING ITS FOREIGN LANGUAGE OFFERINGS AS PERCEIVED BY A SAMPLE OF 90 COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT	DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE			
	Very Important (%)	Important (%)	Not Important (%)	Don't Know/No Response (%)
1. Offer training for and provide expertise to the banking/business/industry sectors of the community to enable their employees to communicate with their Hispanic clientele	47	46	4	3
2. Offer training for and provide assistance to agencies that provide assistance to persons for whom English is their second language (law enforcement, medical, social service agencies, etc.)	63	31	3	2
3. Help to improve the English of persons currently employed in this area for whom English is their second language	60	36	2	2

C. Rating of College Programs, Services, Personnel, Facilities, Relationships and Quality of Gainesville College Education of Gainesville College Graduates

The leader respondents were asked to rate several aspects of the College which are thought to be important in gaining an understanding of the College in its community context. First, the leaders were asked to rate selected aspects of five dimensions of the College: College programs, services, personnel, facilities, and relationships. Second, they were requested to rate the quality of education received at Gainesville College by any Gainesville College graduate who they employ, supervise, or work with in their job environment.

Rating of Programs, Services, Personnel, Facilities, and Relationships. A series of 19 items was included on the questionnaire to gain insight into the community's perception of selected College programs and services, its personnel, facilities, and various types of relationships the College has with different segments of its community. Each respondent was asked to rate the items on a five-point scale from excellent (1.0), above average (2.0), average (3.0), poor (4.0), to very poor (5.0). If not familiar with the aspect being rated, the leaders were asked to give a "Don't Know" response. The ratings were tallied and weighted (excellent=1, above average=2, etc.), and weighted mean scores calculated. The results of the ratings are presented in Table XV.

All but one of the ratings given by the respondents fell within the "above average" range (1.6-2.5). The six items with the highest weighted mean scores and to which over 80 percent of the respondents gave an "Excellent" or "Above Average" rating were: administrators (1.64), the relationship between Gainesville College and the community

as a whole (1.67), appearance of the campus (1.67), the relationship between Gainesville College administrators and the community as a whole (1.72), the teaching faculty (1.86), and the preparation given students to transfer to a four-year institution (1.93).

The item which had the lowest weighted mean and fell into the "Average" range, and was also the only item not given an "Excellent" or "Above Average" rating by over one-half of the respondents, was extraclass experiences given students (2.57). Items receiving ratings toward the low end of the "above average" range were the relationship between Gainesville College students and the community as a whole (2.33), facilities for meetings/workshops (2.34), and recreational facilities (2.40). All of the other items had weighted mean ratings between 1.98 and 2.17, and were rated as "Excellent" or "Above Average" by two-thirds (except cultural activities--65.1 percent) or more of the respondents: Gainesville College Foundation activities (1.98), Continuing Education/Public Service programs (2.06), relationship between Gainesville College faculty and the community as a whole (2.06), preparation given students to enter the job market after two years (2.07), Developmental Studies Program (2.08), instructional facilities (2.13), relationship between Gainesville College and other area postsecondary institutions (2.14), cultural activities (2.16), and relationship between Gainesville College and area high schools (2.17).

The percentage of respondents who gave a "Don't Know" or who did not respond to an item is also included in Table XV. It is significant that over one-half of the respondents gave a "Don't Know" or no response to two items: extraclass experiences (59 percent) and the Developmental Studies Program (56 percent). Note that the extraclass experiences item

is also the item that had the lowest weighted mean score. Other items to which a "Don't Know" or no response was given by 25 percent or more of the leaders were: Gainesville College Foundation activities (37 percent), relationship between Gainesville College and other area postsecondary institutions (36 percent), relationship between Gainesville College and area high schools (34 percent), cultural activities (30 percent), recreational facilities (30 percent), Continuing Education/Public Service programs (26 percent), and the relationship between Gainesville College students and the community as a whole (25 percent). The items to which the fewest "Don't Know" or no responses were given included the relationship between Gainesville College administrators and the community as a whole (8 percent), appearance of campus (9 percent), and the relationship between Gainesville College and the community as a whole (10 percent).

The same data used to prepare Table XV were used in the preparation of Table XVI; however, they are presented from a slightly different perspective: mean ratings given by Hall County leaders are compared with the combined ratings of the respondents from the other counties--Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and north part of Gwinnett. The items in Table XVI are listed in the same order as they are in Table XV. As the data show, the weighted mean ratings of the Hall County leaders were higher than those of the combined other counties on most of the dimensions: the weighted mean ratings were the same on instructional facilities; lower on only five dimensions--relationships between Gainesville College students and the community as a whole, between Gainesville College and area high schools, between Gainesville College faculty and the community as a whole, teaching faculty, and facilities for meetings/workshops--but

TABLE XV. RATING OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE PROGRAMS, SERVICES, PERSONNEL,
FACILITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

DIMENSION	RATING			WEIGHTED MEAN ¹	DON'T KNOW/ NO RESPONSE %
	Excellent/ Above Average	Average	Poor/ Very Poor		
Administrators	90.9	9.1	0.0	1.64	14
Relationship between GC and community as a whole	87.7	12.3	0.0	1.67	10
Appearance of campus	91.5	8.5	0.0	1.67	9
Relationship between GC administrators and the community as a whole	86.7	12.0	1.2	1.72	8
Teaching faculty	86.1	12.5	1.4	1.86	20
Preparation given students to transfer to a 4-year institution	84.2	15.8	0.0	1.93	16
Gainesville College Foundation activities	78.9	21.1	0.0	1.98	37
Continuing education/ public service programs	73.1	26.9	0.0	2.06	26
Relationship between GC faculty and the community as a whole	69.1	30.9	0.0	2.06	24
Preparation given students to enter the job market after 2 years	74.6	25.4	0.0	2.07	21

¹The means were computed using the following weights for the responses: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in calculating the means.

TABLE XV (CONTINUED)

DIMENSION	RATING			WEIGHTED MEAN ¹	DON'T KNOW/ NO RESPONSE %
	Excellent/ Above Average	Average	Poor/ Very Poor		
Developmental Studies program	72.5	27.5	0.0	2.08	56
Instructional facilities	67.5	32.5	0.0	2.13	14
Relationship between GC and other area postsecondary institutions	73.7	22.8	3.5	2.14	36
Cultural activities	65.1	34.9	0.0	2.16	30
Relationship between GC and area high schools	66.1	32.2	1.7	2.17	34
Relationship between Gainesville College students and the community as a whole	56.7	41.8	1.5	2.33	25
Facilities for meetings/workshops	56.8	37.8	5.4	2.34	18
Recreational facilities	55.6	36.5	7.9	2.40	30
Extraclass experiences given students	45.9	45.9	8.1	2.57	59

¹The means were computed using the following weights for the responses: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in calculating the means.

TABLE XVI. A COMPARISON OF HALL COUNTY AND OTHER COUNTY¹ LEADER RATINGS OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S PROGRAMS, SERVICES, PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, AND RELATIONSHIPS

Fall 1990

DIMENSION	WEIGHTED MEAN ²		"DON'T KNOW"/NO RESPONSE	
	Hall County	Other Counties ¹	Hall County (%) ³	Other Counties ¹ (%) ³
Administrators	1.57	1.74	6	24
Relationship between GC and community as a whole	1.51	1.88	4	17
Appearance of campus	1.61	1.76	0	20
Relationship between GC administrators and the community as a whole	1.63	1.85	0	17
Teaching faculty	1.90	1.80	14	27
Preparation given students to transfer to a 4-year institution	1.93	1.94	10	22
Gainesville College Foundation activities	1.98	2.00	18	59
Continuing Education/public service programs	2.00	2.15	16	37

¹Other counties include Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and North part of Gwinnett counties.

²The means were computed by weighting the responses as follows: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in calculating the means.

³The percentages are based on the number of respondents in each population: Hall County—49 respondents; Other Counties—41 respondents.

TABLE XVI (CONTINUED)

DIMENSION	WEIGHTED MEAN ¹		"DON'T KNOW"/NO RESPONSE	
	Hall County	Other Counties ²	Hall County (%) ³	Other Counties (%) ³
Relationship between GC faculty and the community as a whole	2.10	2.00	14	37
Preparation given students to enter the job market after 2 years	2.00	2.17	16	27
Developmental Studies program	2.00	2.18	53	59
Instructional facilities	2.13	2.13	6	24
Relationship between GC and other area postsecondary institutions	2.05	2.33	20	55
Cultural activities	1.95	2.57	14	49
Relationship between GC and area high schools	2.23	2.11	37	32

¹The means were computed by weighting the responses as follows: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in calculating the means.

²Other counties include Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and North part of Gwinnett counties.

³The percentages are based on the number of respondents in each population: Hall County—49 respondents; Other Counties—41 respondents.

TABLE XVI (CONTINUED)

DIMENSION	WEIGHTED MEAN ¹		"DON'T KNOW/NO RESPONSE	
	Hall County	Other Counties ²	Hall County (%) ³	Other Counties ² (%) ³
Relationship between GC students and the community as a whole	2.38	2.26	17	34
Facilities for meetings/workshops	2.36	2.31	8	29
Recreational facilities	2.25	2.65	18	44
Extraclass experiences given students	2.41	2.80	55	63

¹The means were computed by weighting the responses as follows: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in calculating the means.

²Other counties include Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and North part of Gwinnett counties.

³The percentages are based on the number of respondents in each population: Hall County—49 respondents; Other Counties—41 respondents.

Hall County leader ratings were higher on all other items.

It would be expected that those in closest proximity to the College would be more familiar with various dimensions of the College. Hence, the higher percentage of "Don't Know" or no responses from respondents outside Hall County is not surprising. However, while there were several relatively large differences between these two subcommunity populations, there were some major differences in their familiarity with three aspects of the College. These aspects and the percentage of "Don't Know" or no responses given by the Hall County and Other County respondents were: Gainesville College Foundation Activities--18 percent in Hall, 59 percent in Other Counties; relationship between Gainesville College and other area postsecondary institutions--20 percent in Hall, 55 percent in Other Counties; and cultural activities--14 percent in Hall, 49 percent in Other Counties. Also of interest is that none of the Hall County respondents gave a "Don't Know" or no response to the appearance of campus and relationship between Gainesville College administrators and the community as a whole items, whereas 20 percent and 17 percent of the Other County respondents gave one of these responses to these items, respectively.

Rating of the Quality of Gainesville College Education Received by Gainesville College Graduates. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they employ, supervise, or work with anyone in their job environment who graduated from Gainesville College; and, if so, how they would rate the quality of their education received at Gainesville College. Fifty-two percent of the leader respondents replied that they employ, supervise, or work with a Gainesville College graduate; 31 percent did not, and 17 percent did not know. Of the 52 percent who responded that they employ, supervise, or work with a Gainesville College graduate in their job environment, all but one respondent rated

the quality of the Gainesville College graduate's education. These ratings are shown in Table XVII. Nearly three-fourths (73.9 percent) rated the education quality as "Excellent" (21.7 percent) or "Above Average" (52.2 percent). The graduate's education was rated as "Average" by 26.1 percent, and none gave a "Poor" or "Very Poor" rating. The weighted mean score was 2.04.

TABLE XVII. RATING OF THE QUALITY OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE EDUCATION RECEIVED BY GAINESVILLE COLLEGE GRADUATES WHO ARE EMPLOYED, SUPERVISED, OR WHO WORK WITH A LEADER RESPONDENT IN THE JOB ENVIRONMENT AS REPORTED BY THE LEADERS

FALL 1990

EVALUATION				WEIGHTED MEAN ¹ %
Excellent %	Above Average %	Average %	Poor/Very Poor	
21.7	52.2	26.1	0.0	2.04

¹The weighted mean was computed using the following weights for the responses: excellent=1, above average=2, average=3, poor=4, very poor=5. The "Don't Know" responses were not used in the computation.

D. Respondent Contact with Gainesville College

Three items were included on the questionnaire to gain insight into the exposure the leader respondents have had to the College. They were asked to indicate whether or not they had visited the Gainesville College campus, and if they had taken academic and/or nonacademic-credit courses. The responses are summarized in Table XVIII. Ninety-one percent of the respondents had visited the Gainesville College campus, nearly three-fourths of them some time during the past year. Only 13 percent had taken courses at Gainesville College for academic credit, but nearly half (48 percent) had participated in a nonacademic-credit course, seminar, workshop, or other type of Continuing Education/Public Service program at Gainesville College. Such extensive contact adds creditability to the input provided to the College by these respondents.

TABLE XVIII. LEADER RESPONDENT CONTACTS WITH GAINESVILLE COLLEGE AS REPORTED BY RESPONDENTS

FALL 1990

TYPE OF CONTACT	YES %	NO %
Visited Gainesville College campus (During past year)	91 (73)	9
(Before past year)	(18)	
Taken Academic Courses at GC	13	87
Taken Nonacademic Courses at GC (Continuing Education/ Public Services Programs)	48	52

E. Additional Comments

Finally, each respondent was given an opportunity to respond to the following open-ended item: "Gainesville College has just celebrated its 25th anniversary. In the space below, please provide any suggestions which might be helpful as Gainesville College positions itself to move successfully into a second quarter century of service to Northeast Georgia." An entire page was provided on which comments could be written. Fifty-eight (64%) leaders wrote a total of 121 different comments. Some of the comments were a reiteration or extension of comments/suggestions given to other items on their questionnaires, while many other suggestions/ideas were on topics not covered elsewhere on the questionnaire. As would be expected with such an open-ended question, a wide variety of comments emerged. After a cursory review of these written comments, an effort was made to bring some focus to them. They seemed to fall into six broad, general areas: programs/services (academic, nonacademic, personal growth), relationships, personnel (administration, faculty, students), facilities, general image, and future planning/miscellaneous. A summary of the comments by these broad categories is given in Table XIX. While all of the specific comments are useful and are valuable to the College as it continues in its efforts to do sound planning and to further improve its programs and services, only the general themes that seem to run through them are discussed below.

The majority of comments focused on College programs and services--academic programs in particular. Numerous respondents urged the College to strive for four-year college status and to expand its programs/courses to include a multicultural emphasis (including a

broadening of the foreign language program). Several continuing education courses were requested with a business/industry emphasis; the importance of the College being involved in helping the community to grapple with various issues was stressed; and the need to expand the College's visibility through increased publicity and provision of opportunities to visit the campus was also indicated.

Insofar as College relationships are concerned, several complimentary comments were made concerning the degree to which the College is involved in the community, especially the College's leadership. Requests were made for the institution to review the structure of its "advisory board." Also, there were suggestions given for increased involvements with the high schools.

Numerous positive remarks were written about the teaching faculty, and a few suggestions were given for improvement.

Many complimentary statements were made about the College's facilities, and its general image. Such comments as "The College has a lovely campus," "The College is well known," "...highly respected," etc., are reflective of these comments.

Finally, the respondents encouraged the College in its planning efforts through such comments as: "Plan aggressively for the future with a realistic vision of what the future will and can be," "Much of the success of this area for the youth will depend on GC's vision and leadership as the '90s and 21st century are entered," and "...the administration and staff must review both internal and external factors that will impact the school in years ahead, and a plan that reflects these factors should be adopted."

TABLE XIX. SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY BROAD CATEGORY
MADE BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

FALL 1990

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

I. PROGRAMS/SERVICES (Total Comments: 57)

A. Academic Programs/Services

1. Expansion/Modification
 - a. Beyond two-year: strive for 4-year status (9 comments); don't try to be a university/4-year institution; am impressed with work with North Georgia College--hope this will be enlarged to include other degrees/additional programs
 - b. Programs/courses: increase liberal arts programming; add remedial courses for Hispanics/multicultural emphasis; foreign language--expand, students must be able to speak other languages (Japanese, German, Arabic, other Asian Languages); cultures of other countries should be taught so can compete in business place; students should be aware of change in morals, economics, loyalty and different goals people have as compared to former years; stress environmental issues, high technology-computer usage in courses; gear curriculum to account for diversity of students the College will attract in next 10 years; foster more intense efforts to improve writing in classes; internships with local newspaper and free-lance work are available and could become a partnership effort; offer more writing courses
2. Accessibility: offer off-campus courses; sponsor "satellite" courses off main campus, perhaps in neighboring county seats
3. Other: curriculum is well-rounded, offers chance for acquisition of a broad base of knowledge; keep same progressive programs; stress both academic and athletic programs

B. Continuing Education/Public Service Programs:

1. Programs/courses to help elderly, for seniors/families coping with older family member, in financial investments, accounting, banking if interest is present; respond to business/industry needs--provide educational enrichment from developmental to specific job requirements, respond to need for trained employees, provide assistance to cope with layoffs, cutbacks, high-tech training; have seminars to encourage reading; take lead to wipe out illiteracy

TABLE XIX (CONTINUED)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

2. Other: water quality work of Science Division is excellent service; be involved in planned growth and land-use issue, and other issues such as incineration of waste, etc.--College can be a non-biased entity; continue in area of community organization and outreach; somebody, somewhere, needs to launch a focus series to help community decide where it wants to go, what its common values are, and how to get there--some group needs to define who we are and where we're going and how...the College could be the catalyst

C. Nonacademic Programs/Services:

1. Public relations: increase publicity--reach out, talk to community, continue to advertise any way possible and tell of many advantages of attending GC; many do not know what College does for all communities around GC; would personally welcome an opportunity to visit and tour the facilities with some organization or community group in the future; work with local churches to have youth groups, senior adult groups on campus for tours, meetings, special planned events
2. Recruitment: continue effort to recruit/retain minorities (3 comments); industries in Habersham area don't require advanced skills--affects recruiting efforts; Piedmont College is more involved with Habersham area--affects obtaining additional students from the area
3. Other: impressed with direction of theatre program; consider bringing back sports to campus such as basketball/baseball--will add to campus spirit; consider transportation needs

D. Personal Growth:

GC affords opportunity for young people to receive training that will enable them to remain in the local job market arena and effectively compete in occupations of their choice; continue to offer quality education to students on limited income who must also work while attending; encourage more to major in teaching area; education is only way can turn around problems we now face

TABLE XIX (CONTINUED)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

II. RELATIONSHIPS (Total Comments: 23)

A. Community:

1. Community outreach: continue to reach out, be involved--play positive role in future development of area; involve faculty, students, administrators in community; continued involvement of college officials is essential to build on good current relationship; active and involved administration/staff have assured strong, mutually beneficial relationship with the northeast Georgia community; leadership works well with community; impressed with the energy, pride and cooperation from the College; well accepted by the community; been helpful in helping "Emerging Northeast Georgia" face their challenges; College is community-minded
2. Advisory board: establish non-GC alumni advisory group to give input on plans from a highly objective viewpoint; insist on broad range of categories appointed--should include agency heads, general working class representatives, as well as mix of business, professional types; include more industrial leaders in GC area

B. Other Institutions:

1. With high schools: public schools should be encouraged to use the resources for AP; contract arrangements should be made with public schools for specialized instruction by GC professors within the public schools, especially in areas of foreign language and advanced science courses; continue positive partnership with local high schools
2. With technical institutes: hopefully decisions will be made so cooperation may continue with Lanier Tech to avoid duplication of services, competition for students/programs; advocate combining the community college-post secondary vo-tech schools into auxiliary administrative unit
3. Other: continue to open more doors for partnership--GC has ability to lead, therefore lead

TABLE XIX (CONTINUED)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

III. PERSONNEL (Total Comments: 13)

- A. Administration: key administrators liked by community and strong advocates of making Gainesville community a better place; very professional; aggressive leadership from the College appreciated
- B. Faculty/Staff: very professional/well qualified/to be commended; highly regarded and dedicated citizens, active in community life; in general conveys the student is to learn rather than their duty to teach; some convey indifferent attitude about students staying in college; many seek to convey/preserve eccentric academic image; should assemble faculty that relates to unprepared/marginally acceptable college candidates; uniquely focuses on developing/inspiring/giving confidence to those whose basic intellect exceeds their high school preparation for college; some changes in English area needed
- C. Students: impressed with caliber of students--those going to 4-year schools continue to do well, those who enter job market after two years do well

IV. FACILITIES (Total Comments: 5)

- A. Physical plant: expand; beautiful location, lovely campus; location provides opportunity to capture new and emerging market--however, the personal attention that's trademark of GC shouldn't be abandoned; consider foreign language facility development where all institutions of higher education in area who offer foreign languages are scheduled one at a time
- B. Housing: nearby college housing, perhaps dorms, needed

V. GENERAL IMAGE (Total comments: 10)

- A. General: College a real asset, is well-known, highly respected/good reputation, excellent; community takes pride in, hope past will be guide for the future; proud of children who attended GC; in the past has been successful, so keep up with good work; have heard only good and favorable comments; has excellent reputation as a service-oriented, student-centered college

TABLE XIX (CONTINUED)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

VI. FUTURE PLANNING/MISCELLANEOUS (Total Comments: 13)

- A. Planning: plan aggressively for the future with a realistic vision of what the future will and can be; extra effort must be made to keep educational level of citizens in area up to levels needed to serve this community for years to come--influx of Hispanics must be integrated into every aspect of community life; sound management and change for the needs and future will be the keys as in the past; much of success of this area for the youth will depend on GC's vision and leadership as the '90s and 21st century entered; be mindful of the single parents and their needs in planning; to be competitive in the changing environment of the '90s, have to evaluate how to position itself (GC)...this means the administration/staff must review both internal/external factors that will impact the school in years ahead, and a plan that reflects these factors should be adopted; be sensitive to fast changing counties around GC and willing to change to meet the demands of time; assessments such as this are a move in the right direction in attempt to meet community needs; follow-up of this survey should keep the College on track
- B. Miscellaneous: need to get the University System to recognize, fund, affirm continuing education more; well wishes in College efforts to educate for growth in the next 25 years; keep up progress/good work

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section a broad, general portrait of the College is drawn to summarize the data presented in the preceding section of this report. An effort has been made to identify the dominant themes expressed and to draw some general conclusions based on the numerous and varied responses given by the sample of 90 community leader respondents to the open-ended questions; the program awareness, importance, and suggestion items; the ratings of various aspects of the College; and the questions concerning respondent contacts with Gainesville College. No one individual would be expected to see the College exactly as described below since the picture represents a general, composite community perspective.

The leader respondents view the LOCATION of Gainesville College as a great asset. The College is conveniently located and accessible to the community. In addition to its location, the relatively LOW COST and OPEN ADMISSIONS POLICY to attend the College allow many persons an educational opportunity that they might not have otherwise.

The College's CAMPUS IS CONSIDERED ATTRACTIVE, NEAT AND CLEAN as a whole. FACILITIES FOR MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS AND THE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WERE VIEWED SOMEWHAT LESS POSITIVELY than were other aspects of the College.¹ The NEED FOR SOME TYPE OF STUDENT HOUSING seems to exist; the presence of such facilities is viewed by some as a means to make the College more attractive to potential students.

¹It should be noted that the new Continuing Education/Performing Arts Center was in its final stages of construction at the time the data for this study were gathered. Hopefully, perceptions of the College's meeting/workshop facilities will be improved greatly as more and more in the community have an opportunity to use this new facility.

Gainesville College is offering QUALITY PROGRAMS that have earned respect in the community and have helped to develop a good reputation for the College. A BROAD, DIVERSE, AND STRONG CURRICULUM is offered. STUDENTS ARE WELL-PREPARED to transfer to a four-year institution; the education received at Gainesville College by College graduates who are working in the job environment with respondents is viewed positively. The College should continue to EMPHASIZE ALL FOUR OF ITS GENERAL PROGRAMS over the next decade--the college transfer and two-year career programs are considered to be most important, although the Developmental Studies Program and Continuing Education/Public Service Programs are seen as important also, but to a slightly lesser degree from the community perspective.

There are, however, several ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE CURRENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES which might enhance the College's image, improve the quality of programs/courses, and better meet the community's needs. There appears to be a felt need for an EXPANSION OF PROGRAMS/COURSES in numerous ways in essentially all academic areas of the College, but especially an expansion in these ways: beyond the two-year degree level; through increased cooperative activities with other schools, colleges, and technical institutes; in the business and language/multicultural areas; in off-campus settings; through creative scheduling; and with intercollegiate athletics. The College needs to continue its efforts to recruit and to meet special needs of blacks, Hispanics, and non-traditional students.

There is a need for the College to REVIEW ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE AREAS. It is believed that many of the educational needs in both of these areas can be responded to through

Continuing Education programs offered both on campus and off campus in the workplace. Support through academic offerings in these two areas needs to be of a more basic, general nature rather than a more applied approach that might be taken with continuing education-type programs.

While the CONTINUING EDUCATION/PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS ARE PERCEIVED POSITIVELY, there are numerous courses and programs in a wide variety of areas other than those mentioned above that are desired, and that the community believes should be offered, but are not now being offered. In particular, additional training, workshops, or seminars with a business/industry focus are needed. A need also was expressed for the College to PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY ISSUES/DEBATES. USE OF FACILITIES FOR PUBLIC SERVICE FUNCTIONS PROBABLY WILL NOT BE AFFECTED SIGNIFICANTLY if users are charged on a "break-even" fee basis, as long as the cost is reasonable and the services are adequate.

Overall, the College has a STRONG, QUALIFIED TEACHING FACULTY who maintains high standards; and has an OPEN, COMMUNITY-ORIENTED ADMINISTRATION. GOOD RELATIONSHIPS EXIST BETWEEN THE COLLEGE AND ITS COMMUNITY as a whole, and the College is seen to be RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS. ADMINISTRATOR AND FACULTY INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY are recognized; however, STUDENT INVOLVEMENT COULD BE STRENGTHENED through such means as cooperative programs and increased contacts with the community's business and industry sectors.

There is a need to INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF THE COLLEGE through various public relations efforts. While COMMUNITY LEADERS HAVE DIRECT EXPOSURE TO THE CAMPUS and many have participated in some type of Continuing Education/Public Service program or function, there is much evidence that there are many aspects about the College of which they are

generally unaware. The community's awareness level should be raised, in regard to the College's programs (particularly the Developmental Studies Program), services, extraclass experiences offered students, and its Foundation activities. Increasing media exposure and offering events and activities which would encourage individuals and groups to come to the campus are a couple of possible public relations ventures. Further, those in counties outside Hall County generally are less knowledgeable of the College and its functions; hence, concerted public relations efforts need to be made in that direction.

In summary, Gainesville College's "community," as perceived and related through a sample of its leaders, has a relatively high level of satisfaction with the College--its programs, services, relationships, personnel, and facilities--and with the effort put forth by the College to meet community educational needs. However, leaders in the "community" believe that the College should expand both academic and continuing education-type program and course offerings. And, finally, there is a felt need for the College to intensify its public relations efforts to raise its visibility so that its public is more attuned to what the College is doing currently, and what it can do to meet educational needs as they arise.

APPENDIXES: PART I

APPENDIX I-A

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

NOMINATION QUESTIONNAIRE COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY - JUNE 1990

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify various types of leaders in a selected sample of the communities that are in Gainesville College's service area. The leaders who are nominated will serve as a pool from which a sample will be drawn to be interviewed. Those interviewed will be asked to provide information and feedback concerning GC's ongoing programs and services, educational needs which GC might meet, and the services it is felt the College should make available to its constituents. Hopefully, the suggestions and evaluations made will provide a basis for sound planning by GC as it strives to better serve all of its constituents through improved educational programs and services.

In selecting your nominees, keep in mind that it is permissible to nominate the same person in two or more of the leadership categories. Also, self-nominations are in order where appropriate.

Please be aware that your responses will be treated in strict confidence. Therefore, DO NOT SIGN this form. After you have completed this questionnaire, please mail it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope directly to the research consultant by JUNE 25, 1990.

A. GENERAL LEADERSHIP.

Please name the four people you consider to be the most influential in GENERAL community affairs in EACH of the counties listed, regardless of whether or not you approve of the way they use their influence. If you do not feel that you know four leaders in some of these counties, list those you know and leave the remaining spaces blank.

1. Hall County:

2. Barrow County:

3. Forsyth County:

4. Habersham County:

5. North part of Gwinnett County (including Lawrenceville, Buford, Sugar Hill):

APPENDIX I-A

B. SPECIALIZED LEADERSHIP.

Please nominate people you consider to be the most influential leaders in each of the 15 special categories listed below for the 5 counties being used in this study--Hall, Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, north part of Gwinnett. The people you name may or may not hold official positions in the area named. After each name you list, please write in the code number of the leader's county using the following code numbers:

County	Code No.	County	County	Code No.	County
	1	= Hall		4	= Habersham
	2	= Barrow		5	= North part of Gwinnett
	3	= Forsyth			(including Lawrenceville
					Buford, Sugar Hill)

If you are not aware of persons who fit a category, leave the spaces blank.

1. Business/Industry/Banking
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Education
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Political
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Health and Medicine:
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. Cultural Affairs:
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

6. Welfare and Social Services:
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Civic Affairs:
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

8. Religion:
Name Code No.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

APPENDIX I-A

9. Women:

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

10. Labor and Working Class:

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

11. Minorities (Blacks/Hispanics/ Orientals/Native Americans):

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. Communication (Mass Media):

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

13. Recreation:

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

14. Agriculture:

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

15. Law and Law Enforcement:

Name	Code No.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

NOTE: YOUR RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL. PLEASE DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME.

Please complete this questionnaire by June 25, 1990 and mail it in the enclosed, stamped envelope to:

Dr. Harold L. Nix
Project Consultant
Department of Sociology
Baldwin Hall
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

THANK YOU!!

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

A Two-Year Unit of the University System of Georgia

P. O. BOX 1358
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30503-1358
404-535-6210

Office of the President

June 8, 1990

Dear :

Gainesville College is beginning the process of self-study which will lead to its reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in December 1992. This opportunity to take a careful look at the institution is timely as we attempt to position ourselves for the next 25 years of service to emerging Northeast Georgia.

An aspect of the self-study will be a comprehensive community/area needs assessment. This study will be somewhat of a replication and updating of a similar effort completed ten years ago as a part of the accreditation process at that time. Dr. Norma Seerley of our planning and institutional research staff, assisted by Dr. Harold Nix from the University of Georgia, will coordinate the study.

The counties of Hall, Barrow, Habersham, Forsyth, and the northern part of Gwinnett have been selected as representative counties from our service area to be included in the study. We would like for you to assist us by completing the enclosed form on which you are requested to nominate persons who you perceive as leaders in those counties. A sample will be drawn from those nominated to participate in a group interview process which will be the primary data gathering technique utilized in the study. Please complete the form and return it in the envelope provided as soon as possible. We would like to have this step in the study completed by June 25.

We are most appreciative of your willingness to help Gainesville College in this way, and look forward to the results of this study as a means of improving the institution's ability to meet the needs of its service area more effectively. Should you have questions relative to this request, feel free to call Dr. Norma Seerley (404-535-6301) or me (404-535-6210).

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

J. Foster Watkins
President

JFW/bs
Enclosures

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

A Two-Year Unit of the University System of Georgia

*P. O. BOX 1358
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30503
404-535-6210*

Office of the President

June 29, 1990

MEMORANDUM

TO: Selected Community Leaders

FROM: J. Foster Watkins

This is to thank you for responding to the Nomination Questionnaire for Gainesville College's Community Needs Survey, or to encourage you to respond as soon as possible if you have not yet had an opportunity to complete and return the questionnaire. Since the nomination questionnaire responses are anonymous, we do not know who has or has not responded, of course. Nominations from knowledgeable persons such as yourself are crucial to insure that we have an adequate pool of community leader names from which a sample of leaders can be drawn for the interview process of the study. Mrs. Diane Carpenter (404-535-6355) will be pleased to mail a second copy of the questionnaire, if needed.

Thank you again for your assistance.

JFW/ddc

Gainesville College
COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
Fall, 1990

APPENDIX I-D

Gainesville College is committed to providing the best possible educational, cultural, and developmental experiences appropriate to the needs of its students and the citizens of Northeast Georgia. You, as a leader in Gainesville College's service area, represent one of the publics being surveyed to provide important ideas and information. Your input is needed as the College continues in its efforts to do sound planning and to further improve its programs and services. Your responses will be confidential and will not be linked to your name in any way. Results of this study will be available to all of those who serve as respondents.

I. COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PROBLEMS

As you know, every community has needs that should be met and problems that need to be solved in order to make it a better place in which to live. Considering your county as your community, what do you consider as the 3 or 4 **MOST IMPORTANT NEEDS OR PROBLEMS** in **YOUR** county?

1. First, please list the needs or problems in the designated spaces below, **then**
2. Rank order the needs and problems listed in terms of their importance
(1= most important, 2= second most important, etc.)

1. Needs or Problems in My County

2. Rank of Importance

II. GENERAL COLLEGE IMAGE/EVALUATION

3. Now, focusing on Gainesville College, please list below what you consider to be the College's **STRONGEST** points:

4. Any college can be better. What are some ways you think Gainesville College could improve? Please list:

III. COLLEGE PROGRAMS

APPENDIX I-D

A. General Programs

Gainesville College offers a variety of programs. Following is a brief description of the four GENERAL types of programs currently offered:

- (1) **College Transfer:** Programs which are designed to provide the basic, general education courses of the freshman and sophomore years of a 4-year degree program
- (2) **Two-Year Career:** Programs which prepare students to enter the job market upon completion of the programs' courses (for example, the programs in secretarial science, marketing and distribution, etc., and all of the joint programs with technical institutes)
- (3) **Developmental Studies:** Program offered to students who need remedial work to strengthen their academic backgrounds and to better prepare them for college-level work
- (4) **Continuing Education/Public Service:** Educational, cultural, social, and recreational workshops, seminars, courses, and programs for which continuing education credits may be given, but no academic credit is given

5-8. For each program, please **CIRCLE** the number that indicates:

- (1) whether or not you were **AWARE**, before now, that Gainesville College offers the program, and
- (2) the **DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE** you think GC should place on the program over the next decade:

PROGRAM	(1) Level of Awareness		(2) Degree of Importance			
	Aware (1)	Not Aware (2)	Very Important (1)	Important (2)	Not Important (3)	Don't Know (0)
5. College Transfer Programs	1	2	1	2	3	0
6. Two-Year Career Programs	1	2	1	2	3	0
7. Developmental Studies Program	1	2	1	2	3	0
8. Continuing Education/Public Service Programs	1	2	1	2	3	0

B. Academic Offerings, Continuing Education Offerings, and Public Service Functions

9. Are there any specific **COURSES** or **PROGRAMS** not currently offered that you, the organization/business you represent, or people you come in contact with, think Gainesville College should offer for **ACADEMIC CREDIT**? (Academic credit is given for college courses in which grades are earned, and for which students meet college entrance requirements.)

____ (1) Yes.....If yes, ...9a. Please list:

____ (2) No

____ (0) Don't Know

(1) Programs

(2) Courses

10. Are there any specific kinds of training, knowledge, or skills that you, the organization/business you represent, or people you come in contact with, think Gainesville College should offer in the form of **TRAINING COURSES, WORKSHOPS, or SEMINARS** for which there would be **CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS** given, but **NOT** academic credit?

APPENDIX I-D

____ (1) Yes.....If yes, ...10a. Please describe/list:

____ (2) No

____ (0) Don't Know

11. Due to budget constraints, it is anticipated that in the future the use of College facilities for Public Service functions (non-College related meetings/activities) will have to operate on a "break-even" fee basis. Do you think this will reduce significantly the use of College facilities for these purposes?

____ (1) Yes

COMMENTS: _____

____ (2) No

____ (0) Don't Know

C. POTENTIAL COURSES/PROGRAM AREAS

12. **High Technology.** As you know, high technology, particularly computer-based operations, is being integrated increasingly into banking, business, industry, and service agency operations. Are there ways that the College might get more involved in providing educational assistance to these sectors of the community as they continue their movement into high technology?

____ (1) Yes.....If yes, ...12a. Please describe:

____ (2) No

____ (0) Don't Know

13-15. **Foreign Language.** An increasing number of foreign-based firms and individuals from other countries are coming into this area and many area businesses are reaching into the international market. These factors have led to an increased demand for training and expertise in foreign language.

The College currently offers courses in SPANISH and FRENCH, and is continually searching for better ways to meet the language needs of the community. In items 13-15 below, please CIRCLE the number that indicates how important you think it is that Gainesville College should get involved, when requested, in each of the ways described.

Type of Involvement	Degree of Importance			
	Very Important (1)	Important (2)	Not Important (3)	Don't Know (0)
13. Offer training for and provide expertise to the banking/business/industry sectors of the community to enable their employees to communicate with their Hispanic clientele	1	2	3	0
14. Offer training for and provide expertise to agencies that provide assistance to persons for whom English is their second language (law enforcement, medical, social service agencies, etc.)	1	2	3	0
15. Help to improve the English of persons currently employed in this area for whom English is their second language	1	2	3	0

IV. RATING OF PROGRAMS, SERVICES, PERSONNEL, RELATIONSHIPS

APPENDIX I-D

16-34. Following is a list of several dimensions of the College. Please give a general rating for each by CIRCLING the response you think appropriate. If you are not familiar with the program, service, personnel, or relationship, circle "0" to indicate "Don't Know".

PROGRAM	RATING					
	Excellent (1)	Above Average (2)	Average (3)	Poor (4)	Very Poor (5)	Don't Know (0)
16. Preparation given students to transfer to a 4-year institution	1	2	3	4	5	0
17. Preparation given students to enter the job market after 2 years	1	2	3	4	5	0
18. Developmental Studies program (remediation program)	1	2	3	4	5	0
19. Continuing education/public service programs (ex: workshops, seminars, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	0
20. Extraclass experiences given students (ex. dances, clubs, speakers, Intramurals, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	0
21. Cultural activities (ex: art exhibits, plays, music programs, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	0
22. Teaching faculty	1	2	3	4	5	0
23. Administrators	1	2	3	4	5	0
24. Instructional facilities	1	2	3	4	5	0
25. Recreational facilities	1	2	3	4	5	0
26. Facilities for meetings/workshops	1	2	3	4	5	0
27. Appearance of campus	1	2	3	4	5	0
28. Gainesville College Foundation activities	1	2	3	4	5	0
29. Relationship between GC and community as a whole ..	1	2	3	4	5	0
30. Relationship between GC faculty and the community as a whole	1	2	3	4	5	0
31. Relationship between GC administrators and the community as a whole	1	2	3	4	5	0
32. Relationship between GC students and the community as a whole	1	2	3	4	5	0
33. Relationship between GC and other area postsecondary institutions (ex: Brenau, Lanier Tech, N. GA. College).	1	2	3	4	5	0
34. Relationship between GC and area high schools	1	2	3	4	5	0

- ____(1) Yes If yes, ...35a. How would you rate the quality of their education received at GC?
 ____ (2) No ____ (1) Excellent
 ____ (0) Not Sure or ____ (2) Above Average
 Not Applicable ____ (3) Average
 ____ (4) Poor
 ____ (5) Very Poor
 ____ (0) Don't Know

V. PERSONAL INFORMATION

36-43. Following are items about yourself, not to identify you as an individual, but to determine opinions of broad categories of persons. Please check appropriate responses.

36. Age:

- ____ (1) Less than 25 yrs.
 ____ (2) 25-34 yrs.
 ____ (3) 35-49 yrs.
 ____ (4) 50-62 yrs.
 ____ (5) Over 62 yrs.

37. Sex

- ____(1) Male
____(2) Female

38. County of Residence:

- ____ (1) Hall
 ____ (2) Barrow
 ____ (3) Forsyth
 ____ (4) Gwinnett
 ____ (5) Habersham
 ____ (6) Other, Specify:

39. Highest level of Education

- ☐ (1) Elementary school
☐ (2) Some high school
☐ (3) High school graduate or GED
☐ (4) Some college
☐ (5) College degree
☐ (6) Other. Please specify:

40. Primary Occupational category:

- ☐ (1) Agriculture
- ☐ (2) Banking
- ☐ (3) Business/Industry
- ☐ (4) Communications (Mass Media)
- ☐ (5) Education
- ☐ (6) Health/Medicine
- ☐ (7) Law/Law Enforcement
- ☐ (8) Political
- ☐ (9) Recreation
- ☐ (10) Religion
- ☐ (11) Welfare/Social Services
- ☐ (12) Other. Please Specify:

41. Have you ever visited the Gainesville College campus?

- ☐ (1) Yes, during the past year
☐ (2) Yes, but not during the past year
☐ (3) No

42. Have you ever taken courses at Gainesville College for academic (college) credit?

- ____ (1) Yes
 ____ (2) No
 ____ (0) Not sure

43. Have you ever participated in a nonacademic-credit course, seminar, workshop, or other type of Continuing Education/Public Service program at Gainesville College?

- ____ (1) Yes
 ____ (2) No
 ____ (0) Not sure

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

APPENDIX I-D

44. Gainesville College has just celebrated its 25th anniversary. In the space below, please provide any suggestions which might be helpful as GC positions itself to move successfully into a second quarter century of service to Northeast Georgia.

THANK YOU !

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GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

A Two-Year Unit of the University System of Georgia

P. O. BOX 1358
 GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30503-1358
 404-535-6210

Office of the President

October 19, 1990

Dear :

As part of Gainesville College's continued efforts to serve the educational needs of emerging Northeast Georgia in the best possible way, we are conducting our ten-year Community Needs Assessment once again. Samples from several of our publics are being asked to help us to evaluate what we are now doing, and to identify some ways we can better meet the educational needs in our service area. One of the publics being surveyed is our community leaders. You have been selected as one of the community leaders to be surveyed. Since the sample is relatively small, your input is especially important.

Because we know you are a busy person, we have developed a questionnaire that may be completed in a semi-structured interview setting in approximately 20 to 25 minutes and have arranged to conduct interviews in _____ County in the _____. We will be calling you the week of October 29 to set up an appointment time on _____, _____, at ____ a.m. or ____ p.m. We hope you will be able to meet with us during one of these times; if not, we will try to make other arrangements more suitable to your schedule.

Candid and complete information from our community leaders is crucial. Hence, the survey is being conducted off campus, and by our Office of Planning and Institutional Research along with a University of Georgia consultant. Information gained from the survey will in no way be linked to individual respondents in the final report. The survey results will, however, be a vital part of the data base used to "chart the course" for your community college for the next decade.

We hope you will help us with this assessment. Your thoughts and ideas are greatly valued, and they will become a part of the important data base that will assist in positioning Gainesville College as it begins its second quarter century of service to Northeast Georgia. If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to call me (404/535-6210) or our Office of Planning and Institutional Research (404/535-6355).

Sincerely yours,

J. Foster Watkins
 President

JFW/ddc

Enclosures

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**Gainesville College**

A TWO-YEAR UNIT OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

Post Office Box 1358 • Gainesville, Georgia 30503

December 7, 1990

Dear :

Gainesville College's Community Needs Assessment is in its final stages of data collecting. Have we heard from you? Since responses to the questionnaire are anonymous, we cannot track who has and has not responded.

If you have not had an opportunity to complete the questionnaire, it would be most helpful and appreciated if you would take a few minutes to give us your feedback before Christmas. Another copy of the questionnaire and an addressed stamped envelope are enclosed for your convenience. Please discard if you have already returned the questionnaire you received earlier, and we thank you for taking time to provide us with your ideas and perceptions.

Should you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to give me a call, 404/535-6355.

Thank you for your support of and interest in Gainesville College.

Sincerely yours,

Norma R. Seerley
Coordinator of Assessment

NRS/ddc

Enclosures

PART II

REPORT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS SEGMENT
OF THE
GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

FALL 1990

Office of Planning and Institutional Research
Gainesville College
Gainesville, Georgia 30503

PART II

REPORT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS SEGMENT OF THE GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

FALL 1990

I. PURPOSE OF STUDY

This report concerns the high school principals and counselors segment of the Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment Survey conducted in November, 1990. The general goal of this segment of the survey was threefold: (1) to obtain an evaluation and feedback from the College's area high schools concerning the ongoing programs, services, personnel, relationships, and facilities of the college; (2) to identify felt educational needs of the area high schools which Gainesville College might meet and services it might offer; and (3) to heighten an awareness of and interest in Gainesville College. It is believed that such information from the College's area high schools, combined with other available institutional data, provide an adequately accurate general picture of Gainesville College's current situation, and provide meaningful data for use by the College as it continues its efforts to do sound planning and to further improve its programs and services.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Mailed Questionnaire Survey Technique

This study utilized the mailed questionnaire method to collect the data desired. This technique was selected for a variety of reasons, including: many individuals could be contacted at the same time in numerous high schools which are located in a relatively large geographical area; the technique is a relatively economical way to obtain data; respondents may respond at their own convenience; and the targeted population--principals and counselors--could be expected to have an understanding of and vested interest in education, and therefore would likely respond to a mailed questionnaire from a College located within their area. There are disadvantages, of course, including: the return of all questionnaires is difficult to achieve; if the survey is anonymous--as was this one--it is not known who has and who has not responded and why; and respondents do not have an opportunity to ask for clarification of any questionnaire items--a question may have different meanings to different people. In spite of these potential difficulties, with the type of relationship the College has tried to maintain with its area high school principals and counselors, along with the fact that a relatively good response rate did occur (56 percent), it is believed that the insights provided by those who responded provide an adequately accurate, general picture of Gainesville College from the perspective of those in its area high schools for use in the College's planning process.

B. Definition of "Community"

Ideally, a Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment would include feedback from all areas from which the College typically draws its students. However, financial and temporal limitations necessitated a compromise in the definition of the College's "community" for the purposes of this survey. It was decided that for this study "community" would be defined to include Hall, Barrow, Forsyth, Habersham, and Gwinnett (north half, including Lawrenceville, Buford, and Sugar Hill) Counties. Approximately three-fourths of the College's students live within this five-county "community"; also, the "community" so defined is adequately representative of the total area from which the College typically draws its students.

C. Selection of Respondents: Principals and Counselors

It was determined that all high school principals and counselors who are employed in high schools within the area defined as Gainesville College's "community" for this study and from which the College draws students, would be the target population. A total of 21 high schools was identified: Hall County--Gainesville, Lakeview Academy, North Hall, East Hall, West Hall, R.W. Johnson Comprehensive; Forsyth County--Forsyth County Comprehensive, South Forsyth; Barrow County--Winder-Barrow; Habersham County--Habersham Central; North part of Gwinnett County--Dacula, Duluth, North Gwinnett, Central Gwinnett, South Gwinnett, Parkview, Buford, Norcross, Berkmar, Brookwood, Meadow Creek. Using a list compiled by the College's Admissions Office (the names and addresses of all high schools which generate applicants and the names of all

counselors and principals in these schools are listed), a total of 77 potential respondents--56 counselors and 21 principals--was identified to serve as the population for this study. Subsequently, 43 of the 77 potential respondents (56 percent) responded to the mailed questionnaire--11 principals, 31 counselors, and 1 who did not indicate "principal" or "counselor."

D. Characteristics of Respondents

What sorts of persons were the 43 persons who participated in the survey? Table I summarizes the respondents according to selected characteristics. Approximately one-fourth of the respondents were principals and three-fourths were counselors. Nearly two-thirds of both groups were 35-49 years of age. Slightly over 60 percent were females, and nearly 40 percent males. However, nearly all of the principal respondents were male (90.9 percent), while 80 percent of the counselors were female. Overall, about one-third of the respondents had been in their current positions less than six years, 16.7 percent for 6-10 years, about one-fourth for 11-15 years, and another one-fourth for 16 or more years. Over twice the proportion of principals as counselors (63.6 percent and 26.7 percent, respectively) had been in their current positions less than six years, and 13.3 percent of the counselors had been in their current positions over 20 years compared to none of the principals.

TABLE I. CHARACTERISTICS OF 11 PRINCIPALS AND 31 COUNSELORS¹ IN
HALL, BARROW, FORSYTH, HABERSHAM, AND NORTH PART OF
GWINNETT COUNTY HIGH SCHOOLS

FALL 1990

CHARACTERISTIC	PRINCIPALS (%)	COUNSELORS (%)	TOTAL (%)
AGE:			
Less than 35 years	0.0	12.9	9.3
35-49 years	63.6	61.3	62.8
50-62 years	36.4	25.8	27.9
SEX:			
Female	9.1	80.0	61.0
Male	90.9	20.0	39.0
YEARS IN CURRENT POSITION:			
Less than 6 years	63.6	26.7	35.8
6-10 years	9.1	20.0	16.7
11-15 years	9.1	30.0	23.8
16-20 years	18.2	10.0	11.9
Over 20 years	0.0	13.3	11.9

¹One respondent did not indicate his/her occupational status. While the demographic information on this respondent was not available for this table, other data provided by this respondent are utilized.

Survey Instrument Construction

The final survey instrument (Appendix II-A) was constructed by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research staff in consultation with a University of Georgia research consultant. Input was received from faculty, administrators, and staff during the questionnaire's development process. An instrument used in the College's 1980 Community Needs Assessment to survey high school counselors was used as a basis for the development of the 1990 instrument; however, several items were modified and updated to better reflect the College today; several items were added; and the

instrument was modified to include principals as respondents.

Dimensions of the College that were to be studied from the perspective of the College's community high school principals and counselors included:

1. Attitudes and evaluations of the College--its image, programs (academic and nonacademic), services, personnel, facilities, extraclass experiences, and cultural activities
2. Felt educational needs in the area high schools which the College can/should meet, and the services or experiences it should offer
3. College relationships with the community in general and with area high schools; and some specific ways the College could work with local school systems in regard to CPC requirements and to improve education in Northeast Georgia

F. Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were mailed in early November along with a letter from the College President--one to principals which also indicated the counselors in the principal's school who would be receiving a questionnaire, and one to counselors (Appendix II-B). Each was personalized as much as possible. Respondents were requested to return their completed questionnaire within two weeks in a stamped envelope that was addressed to the College Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Follow-up letters were prepared and mailed in early December (Appendix II-C). Prior to mailing the questionnaires, as many informal contacts were made as

possible--the Gainesville College Admissions Office hand delivered a note to several counselors attending an area meeting (Appendix II-D), and the College President AND Executive Vice President made efforts to legitimize the study during any contacts they had with any of the area principals or counselors.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

In this section an analysis is made of the responses given to the various questionnaire items. First, the feedback provided by the respondents on College programs is analyzed. Second, an analysis of the responses given to the open-ended general College image/evaluation items is presented, followed by an analysis of ratings made of College programs, experiences, services, personnel, facilities, relationships, and the quality of Gainesville College education received by anyone who graduated from Gainesville College and works in the respondent's job environment. Next, responses given concerning ways the College could work with local school systems in regard to CPC requirements and the improvement of education in Northeast Georgia are summarized, then responses given to the item related to respondent contacts with Gainesville College and personal experience as a student in two-year colleges are viewed. Finally, the additional comments written are discussed. In the "Summary and Conclusions" section which follows this Data Analysis section, the data are viewed from a broader, more comprehensive perspective.

A. College Programs

The respondents were asked a series of questions which focused on course and program offerings. One set of questions was related to the broad, general types of programs currently offered by the College. A second set of questions solicited feedback on specific programs/courses which the College should offer, but is not currently offering in the Associate of Science and Associate of Arts transfer degree areas, and in the two-year Associate of Applied Science degrees.

General Programs. The four general types of programs currently offered by Gainesville College (College Transfer, Two-Year Career, Developmental Studies, Continuing Education/Public Service) were briefly described on the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they were aware, before receiving the questionnaire, of each program; then to indicate the degree of importance they thought Gainesville College should place on the program over the next decade. The percentage of respondents who indicated an awareness of the four types of programs currently offered by the College is shown in Table II. As these data indicate, all of the principals and counselors who responded to these items were aware of the College Transfer, Developmental Studies and Two-Year Career Programs, and 90 percent indicated an awareness of the Continuing Education/Public Service Program prior to receiving the questionnaire.

TABLE II. PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS
WHO INDICATED AN AWARENESS OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S
FOUR GENERAL PROGRAMS

FALL 1990

GENERAL PROGRAM	AWARE OF PROGRAM (%)
College Transfer Programs	100
Developmental Studies Program	100
Two-Year Career Programs	100
Continuing Education/Public Service Programs	90

When asked to indicate the degree of importance that Gainesville College should place on a program over the next decade, nearly all of the leaders who responded to this question indicated that the College should consider all four programs as important or very important. But, relatively speaking, a greater percent of the respondents (over 95 percent) felt the College Transfer and Developmental Studies Programs should be considered as "Very Important" than they did the Two-Year Career Programs or the Continuing Education/Public Service Programs (79.1 and 58.5 percent, respectively). The data in Table III detail the percentages of these responses.

TABLE III. DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE GAINESVILLE COLLEGE SHOULD PLACE ON THE FOUR GENERAL PROGRAMS OVER THE NEXT DECADE AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

GENERAL PROGRAM	DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE		
	Very Important (%)	Important (%)	Not Important (%)
College Transfer Programs	95.3	4.7	0
Developmental Studies Program	95.2	4.8	0
Two-Year Career Programs	79.1	20.9	0
Continuing Education/ Public Service Programs	58.5	41.5	0

Specific Programs/Courses. The respondents were first asked to indicate if there are any transfer programs or specific transfer courses which Gainesville College should offer that it is not now offering, then asked if there are any two-year career programs which the College should offer that it is not now offering. Responses to each of these questionnaire items are summarized below.

Transfer Programs/Courses. When the respondents were asked if there were any transfer programs or specific transfer courses that the College should be offering that are not currently being offered, 28 percent indicated "No" and only nine percent indicated "Yes." Sixty-three percent gave a "Don't Know" response. There were four transfer program/course suggestions given: preprofessional, art, physical therapy, and pre-physical therapy.

Two-year Career Programs. When asked if there are any two-year career programs which the College should offer that it is not now offering, 37 percent indicated "No," and 16 percent indicated "Yes." A total of 47 percent gave a "Don't Know" response. The program suggestions given by those who gave a "Yes" response are as follows: paralegal (2 suggested), physical therapy, legal assistant, health careers (radiology or physical therapy assistant), and wildlife management.

B. General College Image/Evaluation

An awareness of the image that a college has in its community is important for a public institution which has as part of its stated mission to serve the needs of the community in which it is located. Knowledge of the image held by the high school principals and counselors in the College's community is especially relevant due to their interest in education and the fact that they have direct contact with yet another segment in the community that is particularly important to the College--high school students. How do the principals and counselors in Gainesville College's community see the College? What are the College's strong points? How could the College improve? A descriptive analysis of these dimensions as seen through the eyes of the principal and counselor respondents follows.

Gainesville College's Strongest Points. The question, "What do you consider to be Gainesville College's strongest points?" elicited a total of 96 responses. Six respondents gave no suggestions. Responses given were combined where it seemed logical, then tabulated, and organized into five broad, general

categories: programs/services (academic, nonacademic); facilities; relationships (intracampus, to community, with other educational institutions); personnel (faculty, administration); and miscellaneous (comments which could not be categorized logically into one of the preceding categories). The responses to this question concerning the College's strongest points are summarized, tabulated and categorized in Tables IV, V, and VI. It should be noted that the process of combining and categorizing written questionnaire comments as has been done is a highly subjective process, and does impact data interpretation. Nevertheless, this process provides a systematic way to focus on data from open-ended questions as used in this study.

In Table IV the rank order of Gainesville College's strongest points by the five general categories listed above is given. Also, tallies of subcategories of each general category are provided. Over one-fourth (27) of the comments concerned positive aspects of the College's programs and services, with the majority of those comments focusing on academic programs. The remaining comments were fairly well divided among the remaining general categories--20 concerned facilities (location in particular), 18 pertained to relationships, 15 focused on College personnel (especially faculty), and the remaining 16 were a variety of miscellaneous comments.

The data in Table V are a breakdown of the general categories used in Table IV into subcategories and specific (some combined) comments made by respondents. Data in Table VI draw from Table V and delineate the top eight specific points in rank order according

to the number of times mentioned. The College's location was mentioned most often, and the quality of the faculty second most often as the College's strongest points. The quality programs (academic) and size factors were mentioned next most often, followed by faculty/staff-student relationships, community relationships, cost, and the College's open admissions policy.

TABLE IV. RANK ORDER OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S STRONGEST POINTS BY GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

RANK	GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY STRONGEST POINT	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Programs/Services Academic: 18 Nonacademic: 9	27
2	Facilities Location: 19 Buildings: 1	20
3	Relationships Intracampus: 8 Community: 8 Other Institutions: 2	18
4	Personnel Faculty: 14 Administration: 1	15
5	Miscellaneous Size factors: 9 Cost: 5 Other: 2	16
TOTAL COMMENTS ON STRONGEST POINTS		96

TABLE V. GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS BY
GENERAL CATEGORY AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS		NO. TIMES MENTIONED
I. PROGRAMS/SERVICES (Total Comments: 27;		
A.	Academic Programs/Services (Subtotal: 18)	
	1. Quality programs: strong, excellent academic credentials/curriculum; good transfer program	9
	2. Course/Program variety: flexible enough to meet wide variety of needs	3
	3. Individualized focus: work with students at their achieved level	3
	4. Developmental Studies program	2
	5. Other: flexible hours for students	1
B.	Nonacademic Programs/Services (Subtotal: 9)	
	1. Open admissions policy; opportunity to go to college if choose to	4
	2. Financial aid: scholarship/aid programs	3
	3. Public Relations/Visibility: constant communications about offerings	2
II. FACILITIES (Total Comments: 20)		
A.	Location: allows students to live at home; accessible/convenient	19
B.	Buildings: inviting/beautifully kept	1

TABLE V (CONTINUED)

GENERAL CATEGORY/ SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS		NO. TIMES MENTIONED
III. RELATIONSHIPS (Total Comments: 18)		
A.	Community (Subtotal: 8)	
	1. Involvement/service/cooperation/relations	6
	2. Community leadership	1
	3. Foundation is community based	1
B.	Intracampus (Subtotal: 8)	
	1. Faculty/staff-student relationships: caring/ personal/supportive; positive; personal interest; friendly atmosphere; students challenged yet comfortable with professors	8
C.	Other Educational Institutions (Subtotal: 2)	
	1. Public Schools: close relationship maintained with high schools	1
	2. Coordination of programs with technical schools and North Georgia College	1
IV. PERSONNEL (Total Comments: 15)		
A.	Faculty (Subtotal: 14)	
	1. Quality: strong, competent, qualified	12
	2. Good instruction; resourceful	2
B.	Administration	1
V. MISCELLANEOUS (Total Comments: 16)		
A.	Size factors: college size; faculty-student ratio; small classes	9
B.	Cost: low, affordable	5
C.	Other: sincere interest in education; everyone has chance to succeed	2

TABLE VI. RANK ORDER OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE'S TOP EIGHT SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

RANK	SPECIFIC STRONGEST POINTS	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Location	19
2	Quality faculty	12
3	Quality programs (academic)	9
3	Size factors	9
5	Faculty/staff-student relationships	8
6	Community relationships	6
7	Cost	5
8	Open admissions policy	4

Ways Gainesville College Could Improve. There were 35 responses given to the open-ended question, "What are some ways you think Gainesville College could improve?" It is significant that 19 of the 43 respondents (44 percent) gave no suggestions for improvement, possibly indicating either a lack of much in-depth familiarity with the College or a high level of satisfaction. Responses to this item are summarized in Tables VII, VIII, and IX. The format used for these tables is the same as that used in the tables describing the College's strongest points.

As the data in Table VII point out, the majority of the suggestions for improvement concerned College academic and nonacademic programs and services, with only a few comments focused on facilities--providing student housing in particular. In Table

VIII the specific-improvement comments are detailed by the same broad general categories used in Table VII. It should be noted that overall the majority of the comments are suggestions that the College expand or enhance its programs, services, or facilities in some way--beyond two-year offerings, through the joint enrollment program, athletics, student housing, and recruitment efforts.

In Table IX the top five specific suggestions for improvement are listed in rank order by number of times mentioned. Increased visibility/public relations efforts were mentioned most frequently as ways Gainesville College could improve. Enhancement of the joint enrollment program in some way was mentioned second most often. Following these two suggestions as ways the College could improve were expansion beyond two-year offerings, expansion of academic programs/courses, and offering some type of student housing .

TABLE VII. RANK ORDER OF WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD IMPROVE
BY CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

RANK	GENERAL CATEGORY/SUBCATEGORY WAYS OF IMPROVING	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Programs/Services Academic: 16 Nonacademic: 12	28
2	Facilities Housing: 4 Facility space: 1	5
3	Miscellaneous	2
TOTAL COMMENTS ON WAYS TO IMPROVE		35

TABLE VIII. SPECIFIC WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD IMPROVE BY
GENERAL CATEGORY AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

GENERAL CATEGORY/SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE		NO. TIMES MENTIONED
I. PROGRAMS/SERVICES (Total Comments: 28)		
A.	Academic Programs/Services (Subtotal: 16)	
	1. Expansion	
	a. Beyond two-year offerings: become 4-year institution; graduate programs	4
	b. Programs/courses: more courses; summer program for high school students to explore college; off-campus courses; larger Dental Hygiene Program	4
	2. Joint enrollment program: enhance program-- build on; have satellite courses in Gwinnett; coordinate completion dates with high school graduation	5
	3. Academic advisement: continue careful advisement for transfer to 4-year schools; possible problem with transfer of math to Georgia Tech	3
B.	Nonacademic Services (Subtotal: 12)	
	1. Visibility/Public relations: increase--advertise more(including summer program), keep name before public; continue PR to overcome image of small college like high school; emphasize transferability of courses	6
	2. Recruitment/financial aid: increase recruitment efforts, have transportation/tours for potential students	3
	3. Athletics: rethink reviving program; have football team to attract marginal high school athletes	3
II. FACILITIES (Total Comments: 5)		
A.	Housing: student dorms	4
B.	Facility space: more space needed as grow	1
III. MISCELLANEOUS (Total Comments: 2)		
A.	Size: don't get larger by going to four-year school	1
B.	Name: Preferred name, "Gainesville Junior College," current name confusing regarding two-year or four-year status	1

TABLE IX. RANK ORDER OF THE TOP FIVE WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE
COULD IMPROVE AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

RANK	SPECIFIC WAYS TO IMPROVE	NO. TIMES MENTIONED
1	Increase visibility/public relations	6
2	Joint Enrollment program enhancement	5
3	Expansion beyond two-year offerings	4
3	Expansion of programs/courses (academic)	4
3	Housing for students	4

C. Rating of College Programs, Experiences, Services, Personnel,
Facilities, Relationships, and Quality of Gainesville College
Education of Graduates

The principals and counselors were asked to rate several aspects of the College which are thought to be important in gaining an understanding of the College from the perspective that these respondents have. First, the respondents were asked to rate selected aspects of six dimensions of the College: programs, experiences, services, personnel, facilities, and relationships. Following their rating of these aspects of the College, the respondents were asked to indicate any other services or experiences which Gainesville College should be providing that it is not now providing. Second, they were requested to rate the quality of education received at Gainesville College by any Gainesville College graduate who they employ, supervise, or work with in their job environment.

Rating of Programs, Experiences, Services, Personnel, Facilities, and Relationships. A series of 21 items was included

on the questionnaire to gain insight into the community's perception of selected College programs, experiences the College offers its students, services offered, College personnel, facilities, and relationships the College has with the community and with area high schools. Each respondent was asked to rate the items on a five-point scale from excellent (1.0), above average (2.0), average (3.0), poor (4.0), to very poor (5.0). If not familiar with the aspect being rated, the principals and counselors were asked to give a "Don't Know" response. The ratings were tallied and weighted (excellent=1, above average=2, etc.), and mean scores were calculated. The results of the ratings are presented in Table X.

Weighted means of eight ratings given by the respondents fell within the "Excellent" range (1.0-1.5). These included the College's PROBE recruitment activities (1.29), relationship between GC and area high schools (1.36), Admissions Office services (1.36), Financial Aid services (1.38), appearance of campus (1.39), relationship between GC and the community as a whole (1.44), preparation given students to transfer to a four-year institution (1.47), and the Registrar's Office services (1.47). The Registrar's Office services is the only item that was rated as "Excellent" or "Above Average" by all (100 percent) of the respondents who rated the office.

All of the other ratings fell within the "above average" range (1.6-2.5). The item with the lowest mean rating--the only item not given an "Excellent" or "Above Average" rating by at least three-fourths of the respondents who rated them--concerned extraclass

experiences given students (2.25). Items receiving relatively lower ratings were recreational facilities (1.93) and cultural activities (1.96). All other items had weighted mean ratings between 1.61 and 1.84 and received "Excellent" or "Above Average" ratings by 83 percent or more of the respondents who rated them: assistance given students in the transition from high school to college (1.61), Guidance/Counseling services (1.63), academic advisement given students by faculty (1.64), administrators (1.69), Developmental Studies program (1.70), Continuing Education/Public Service programs (1.74), teaching faculty (1.78), preparation given students to enter the job market after two years (1.82), Library/Learning Resource Center (1.82), and instructional facilities (1.84).

The percentage of respondents who gave a "Don't Know" or who did not respond to an item is also included in Table X. It is significant that 63 percent of the respondents gave a "Don't Know" or no response to the extraclass experiences item which is also the item that had the lowest weighted mean score. Other items to which a "Don't Know" or no response was given by 25 percent or more of the principals and counselors were: academic advisement given students by faculty (42 percent); Library/Learning Resource Center, cultural activities, and preparation given students to enter the job market after two years (35 percent); recreational facilities and Guidance/Counseling Services (30 percent); Continuing Education/Public Service Programs (28 percent); and Registrar's Office Services (26 percent). Four items which had fewer than ten percent "Don't Know" or no responses were relationship between Gainesville College and area high schools (2 percent), appearance of campus (5 percent) relationship between Gainesville College and

TABLE X. RATING OF SELECTED GAINESVILLE COLLEGE PROGRAMS, EXPERIENCES, SERVICES,
PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, AND RELATIONSHIPS BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

DIMENSION	RATING			WEIGHTED MEAN ¹	"DON'T KNOW"/ NO RESPONSE (%)
	Excellent/ Above Average (%)	Average (%)	Poor/ Very Poor (%)		
PROBE recruitment activities	94.3	5.7	0.0	1.29	19
Relationships between GC and area high schools	95.2	2.4	2.4	1.36	2
Admissions Office services	94.9	5.1	0.0	1.36	9
Financial Aid services	97.1	2.9	0.0	1.38	21
Appearance of campus	92.7	7.3	0.0	1.39	5
Relationship between GC and the community as a whole	92.7	4.9	2.4	1.44	5
Preparation given students to transfer to a 4-year institution	94.4	5.6	0.0	1.47	16
Registrar's Office services	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.47	26
Assistance given students in transitioning from H.S. to college	87.9	12.1	0.0	1.61	23
Guidance/Counseling Services	86.7	13.3	0.0	1.63	30
Academic advisement given students by faculty	88.0	12.0	0.0	1.64	42
Administrators	94.4	5.6	0.0	1.69	16
Developmental Studies program	84.8	15.2	0.0	1.70	23
Continuing education/public service programs	93.5	6.5	0.0	1.74	28
Teaching Faculty	88.9	11.1	0.0	1.78	16
Preparation given students to enter the job market after 2 years	85.7	14.3	0.0	1.82	35
Library/Learning Resource Center	85.7	14.3	0.0	1.82	35
Instructional facilities	83.8	16.2	0.0	1.84	14
Recreational facilities	76.7	23.3	0.0	1.93	30
Cultural activities	78.6	21.4	0.0	1.96	35
Extraclass experiences	56.3	43.8	0.0	2.25	63

¹The means were computed using the following weights for the responses: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in calculating the means.

the community as a whole (5 percent), and Admissions Office services (9 percent). All other items had 14 or more percent "Don't Know" or no responses.

Other Services or Experiences which Gainesville College Should Provide. Following their giving ratings to the dimensions discussed above, the principals and counselors were asked to list any other services or experiences that Gainesville College should be providing that it is not now providing. Only four suggestions were given: two concerned athletics (reinstate basketball program; competitive sports); one was to offer (and advertise to high school students) summer courses related to CPC; and one was to provide off-campus courses in Gwinnett County.

Rating of the Quality of Gainesville College Education Received by Gainesville College Graduates. The principals and counselors were asked to indicate whether or not they employ, supervise, or work with anyone in their job environment who graduated from Gainesville College; and if so, how they would rate the quality of their education received at Gainesville College. Forty-two percent of the respondents replied that they employed, supervised, or worked with a Gainesville College graduate; 30 percent did not, and 28 percent did not know. Of the 42 percent who responded that they employ, supervise, or work with a Gainesville College graduate in their job environment, 94 percent rated the education quality as "Excellent" (50 percent) or "Above Average" (44 percent). The graduate's education was rated as "Average" by six percent, and none gave "Poor" or "Very Poor" ratings. The weighted mean score was 1.56. These ratings are shown in Table XI.

TABLE XI. RATING OF THE QUALITY OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE EDUCATION RECEIVED BY GAINESVILLE COLLEGE GRADUATES WHO ARE EMPLOYED, SUPERVISED, OR WHO WORK WITH A PRINCIPAL OR COUNSELOR RESPONDENT IN THE JOB ENVIRONMENT AS REPORTED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

EVALUATION				WEIGHTED MEAN ¹
Excellent %	Above Average %	Average %	Poor/Very Poor %	
50	44	6	0	1.56

¹The weighted mean was computed using the following weights for the responses: Excellent=1, Above Average=2, Average=3, Poor=4, Very Poor=5. The "Don't Know" and no responses were not used in the computation.

D. Local School-Gainesville College Cooperation

Two questionnaire items concerned ways Gainesville College might work with local school systems. One concerned CPC requirements, the other focused on the general improvement of education in the area.

Encouragement of Public School Students to Complete CPC Requirements. The principals and counselors were asked if there were ways that the College could work with local school systems to encourage students to complete all CPC requirements while in high school; and, if so, to indicate how. While nearly one-half indicated they did not know, over one-third (37 percent) indicated "Yes" and provided 18 suggestions. The various responses were tabulated and organized by grouping together similar comments where possible. They are summarized in Table XII.

TABLE XII. WAYS GAINESVILLE COLLEGE COULD WORK WITH LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO COMPLETE ALL CPC REQUIREMENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL AS INDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND COUNSELORS

FALL 1990

SUGGESTION	NO. COMMENTS
1. Communications/presentations to high schoolers: reinforce what high schools try to do, emphasize importance of CPC; present scenarios of students not completing CPC requirements--actual cost to students; hold area meetings for students/parents on college admissions of generic nature; provide information/handouts for 10th/11th graders at PROBE fair; communicate college needs to high schools; visit high schools more; article in paper	11
2. Requirements (CPC-related): raise standards--don't admit students with more than 2-3 deficiencies; CPC requires 2 years of foreign language, college should require 2 quarters foreign language; University System should rethink CPC physics requirement of all students	4
3. Requirements (Developmental Studies): need to clarify criteria used for admission into Development Studies program; all postsecondary institutions should have consistent criteria for Developmental Studies	2
4. Program: have summer programs dealing with "Preparation for College"	1

As information in the table indicates, most of the suggestions centered around various sorts of communications the College might have with high schools, their students and parents. A few other suggestions were made concerning CPC and Developmental Studies requirements, and only one programmatic suggestion was given.

Improvement of Education in Northeast Georgia Through Gainesville College and Local School System Cooperation. The principals and counselors were asked to indicate whether or not there were ways (other than to encourage high schoolers to complete CPC requirements while in high school) that Gainesville College could work with local school systems to improve education in Northeast Georgia; and, if so, to indicate how. Only 9 percent marked the "Yes" response, 16 percent the "No" response, and nearly three-fourths (74 percent) indicated "Don't Know." Only five suggestions were given: provide tours for potential students who otherwise might not believe they have a chance to attend a college; have a career day on campus--invite local tenth and eleventh graders; help high schools understand why so many go into Developmental Studies; increase visibility; and create more four-year programs on Gainesville College campus.

E. Respondent Contact with Gainesville College and Exposure to Two-Year Colleges

Two items were included on the questionnaire to gain insight into the exposure the principal and counselor respondents have had to the College and to two-year institutions. They were asked to indicate whether or not they had visited the Gainesville College campus; and if they had attended Gainesville College or another two-year institution. The responses are summarized in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII. PRINCIPAL AND COUNSELOR RESPONDENT CONTACT WITH
GAINESVILLE COLLEGE AND ATTENDANCE AT A TWO-YEAR
COLLEGE

FALL 1990

CONTACT	PERCENT
Visited Gainesville College Campus	93
During past year: 70%	
Before last year: 23%	
Attended Two-Year College	26
Attended Gainesville College: 7%	
Attended Other Two-Year College: 19%	

Nearly all of the respondents (93%) had been on the College campus, with over two-thirds having been on the campus within the past year. Over one-fourth of the respondents had had a personal experience as a student in a two-year college--seven percent of these at Gainesville College.

F. Additional Comments

Finally, each respondent was given an opportunity to respond to the following open-ended item: "Gainesville College has just celebrated its 25th anniversary. In the space below, please provide any suggestions which might be helpful as Gainesville College positions itself to move successfully into its second quarter century of service to Northeast Georgia." An additional sheet of paper was inserted in the questionnaire to provide more space for comments, if needed. Thirteen (30 percent) of the respondents wrote 16 different additional comments. These are summarized below in Table XIV. As would be expected with such an open-ended question, a variety of comments emerged. In an effort to bring focus to these varied comments, they were organized into

the broad, general areas of programs/services, facilities, relationships, and miscellaneous. The majority of comments were complimentary in nature.

TABLE XIV. SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY BROAD CATEGORY MADE BY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND COUNSELOR RESPONDENTS

FALL 1990

COMMENTS

I. PROGRAMS/SERVICES (Total Comments: 6)

- A. Financial aid: appreciation of assistance given high school students--good resource for counselors
- B. Admissions Office: responds with assistance/information when needed--good resource for counselors
- C. Program expansion: possible to become four-year institution? Consider specific programs to support learning disabled students (in addition to Developmental Studies); expand community course offerings (or make public more aware of offerings)
- D. Program/Course improvement: need to examine grading method used to pass ENG 101/102

II. FACILITIES (Total Comments: 2)

- A. Dormitories might give more students an opportunity to attend Gainesville College
- B. Develop comprehensive facilities plan--at least report plans to community

III. RELATIONSHIPS (Total Comments: 1)

- A. Close work with University System colleges would assure transferability of all Gainesville College coursework toward other institutions' requirements

IV. MISCELLANEOUS (Total Comments: 7)

- A. General positive image/reputation comments: great school, good reputation, etc.
-

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section a broad, general portrait of the College is drawn to summarize the data presented in the preceding section of this report. An effort was made to identify the dominant themes expressed and to draw some general conclusions based on the numerous and varied responses given by the 43 principal and counselor respondents to the open-ended questions; program awareness, importance, and suggestion items; the ratings of various aspects of the College; the questions concerning ways the College might work with the public school systems; and the questions concerning respondent contacts with Gainesville College and their personal experiences as students in two-year colleges. It should be noted that no one high school principal or counselor would be expected to see the College exactly as described below since the picture represents a general, composite perspective from the selected high school personnel.

Gainesville College's LOCATION is one of its greatest assets. It is conveniently located and is accessible to the community. The College's relatively SMALL SIZE, the REASONABLE COST to attend, and the OPEN-DOOR POLICY it maintains are also strengths.

The high school principal and counselor respondents were AWARE OF THE COLLEGE'S FOUR TYPES OF GENERAL PROGRAMS (College Transfer, Two-Year Career, Developmental Studies, Continuing Education/Public Service) and believe that all four should be continued over the next decade, but with greater emphasis given to the transfer and Developmental Studies programs. The ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ARE STRONG, QUALITY PROGRAMS that have a good reputation. STUDENTS ARE WELL

PREPARED TO TRANSFER TO FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS. Few specific programs or courses were suggested that should be offered that are not currently being offered either as a transfer or as a two-year career program/course. However, the College was encouraged to EXPAND BEYOND ITS TWO-YEAR OFFERINGS (to become a four-year institution in particular), and to CONSIDER ENHANCING THE JOINT ENROLLMENT PROGRAM. The education received at Gainesville College by its graduates who are working in the high school environment with the respondents was viewed positively.

The College has a STRONG, COMPETENT, QUALIFIED FACULTY who maintains caring, friendly, positive relationships with students. Students are challenged, yet feel comfortable with them. The ADMINISTRATION IS VIEWED POSITIVELY, AS ARE COLLEGE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY AND AREA HIGH SCHOOLS. The College was encouraged to work with the high schools in various ways to GET STUDENTS TO COMPLETE ALL CPC REQUIREMENTS while in high school through visits, presentations, summer programs, dissemination of information via newspaper articles, PROBE fairs, etc.

Three units within the College with which high school personnel typically have much contact were viewed as providing excellent services: Admissions, Financial Aid, and Registrar's Offices. The College's PROBE recruitment activities, a responsibility of the Admissions Office, were also viewed as excellent.

A need exists to INCREASE THE VISIBILITY of the College. In spite of the fact that nearly all of the principals and counselors have been on the Gainesville College campus, a significant number

of them lacked awareness of the quality of several important facets of the College, including: extraclass experiences and cultural activities for students, the academic advisement given students by faculty, the Library/Learning Resource Center and recreational facilities, preparation given students in the two-year career programs to enter the job market, and the Counseling Office Services. Increased public relations efforts should help increase knowledge of these as well as other aspects of the College.

Finally, APPEARANCE of the College campus is perceived positively; facilities are considered to be above average. However, it is believed that there is a NEED FOR SOME TYPE OF STUDENT HOUSING.

In summary, the principals and counselors in Gainesville College's "community" high schools have a high level of satisfaction with the College--its programs, services, relationships, personnel, facilities, and experiences offered students. However, there are some actions that they believe the College should consider taking: increasing the visibility of Gainesville College through increased public relations efforts, expanding its program/course offerings (especially beyond the two-year level), improving communication with high schoolers about the meaning and importance of meeting CPC requirements, and making some sort of student housing available.

APPENDIXES: PART II

Gainesville College

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT--HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS/COUNSELORS
FALL, 1990

Gainesville College is committed to providing the best possible educational, cultural, and developmental experiences appropriate to the needs of its students and the citizens of Northeast Georgia. As one who has an interest in education and who has direct contact with an important segment of our community--high school students--you can provide valuable ideas and information that would help the College in its efforts to do sound planning and to further improve its programs and services. Please assist us in our efforts by completing this questionnaire and returning it in the enclosed envelope by **NOVEMBER 14, 1990**. An additional sheet of paper is included for your use if needed for any of the items. Your responses will be confidential and will not be linked to your name in any way. Results of this study will be sent to all area high schools that are participating in this study.

I. COLLEGE PROGRAMS

A. General Programs

Gainesville College, in response to the changing needs of the area and in keeping with its role as a liberal arts-based, transfer-oriented, two-year unit of the University System of Georgia, provides a variety of programs and services for those who wish to further their formal education, enrich their lives, and broaden their understanding. Following is a brief description of the **FOUR GENERAL TYPES** of programs currently offered:

- (1) **College Transfer:** Programs which are designed to provide the basic, general education courses of the freshman and sophomore years of a four-year degree program
- (2) **Developmental Studies:** Program offered to students who need remedial work to strengthen their academic backgrounds and better prepare them for college-level work
- (3) **Two-Year Career:** Programs which prepare students to enter the job market upon completion of the courses (for example, the programs in secretarial science, marketing and distribution, etc., and all of the joint programs with technical institutes)
- (4) **Continuing Education/Public Service:** Educational, cultural, social, and recreational workshops, seminars, courses and programs for which continuing education credits may be given, but no academic credit is given

1 - 4. For each program, please **CIRCLE** the number that indicates:

- (1) whether or not you were **AWARE**, before now, that Gainesville College offers the program,
and
- (2) the **DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE** you think GC should place on the program over the next decade:

	(1) Level of Awareness		(2) Degree of Importance			
	Aware	Not Aware	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Don't Know
1. College Transfer Programs.	1	2	1	2	3	0
2. Developmental Studies Program. . .	1	2	1	2	3	0
3. Two-Year Career Programs	1	2	1	2	3	0
4. Continuing Education/Public Service Programs	1	2	1	2	3	0

B. Specific Programs/Courses

5. Currently Gainesville College offers courses which lead to Associate of Science transfer degrees (such as Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics, Teacher Education, etc.) and Associate of Arts transfer degrees (such as Business Administration, English, Political Science, Psychology, Social Work, Speech/Drama, etc.). Are there any TRANSFER PROGRAMS specific TRANSFER COURSES which Gainesville College should offer that it is not now offering?

____ (1) Yes If yes 5a. Please Indicate:

____ (2) No

(1) Programs

(2) Courses

____ (0) Don't Know

(Please use additional paper if needed)

6. Gainesville College also offers two-year programs which lead to an Associate of Applied Science degree, including programs in fashion merchandising and marketing; several joint programs with technical institutes such as secretarial science and computer programming; and specialized programs such as Dental Hygiene with Lanier Tech and Nursing with North Georgia College. Are there any two-year career programs which Gainesville College should offer that it is not now offering?

____ (1) Yes If yes 6a. Please list:

____ (2) No

____ (0) Don't Know

(Please use additional paper if needed)

II. GENERAL COLLEGE IMAGE/EVALUATION

7. What do you consider to be Gainesville College's STRONGEST points?

8. Any college can be better. What are some ways you think Gainesville College could improve?

II: RATING OF PROGRAMS, EXPERIENCES, SERVICES, PERSONNEL, AND RELATIONSHIPS

9 - 29. Following is a list of several dimensions of the College. Please give a general rating for each by CIRCLING the response you think appropriate. If you are not familiar with the program, experience, service, personnel, or relationship, circle "0" to indicate "Don't Know".

DIMENSION	RATING					
	Excellent (1)	Above Average (2)	Average (3)	Poor (4)	Very Poor (5)	Don't Know (0)
9. Preparation given students to transfer to a 4-year institution	1	2	3	4	5	0
10. Preparation given students to enter the job market after 2 years.	1	2	3	4	5	0
11. Developmental Studies program (remediation program).	1	2	3	4	5	0
12. Continuing education/public service programs (ex: workshops, seminars, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	0
13. Extraclass experiences given students (ex: dances, clubs, speakers, intramurals, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	0
14. Cultural activities (ex: art exhibits, plays, music programs, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	0
15. Teaching Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	0
16. Administrators.	1	2	3	4	5	0
17. Instructional facilities	1	2	3	4	5	0
18. Recreational facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	0
19. Library/Learning Resource Center.	1	2	3	4	5	0
20. Appearance of campus.	1	2	3	4	5	0
21. Relationship between GC and the community as a whole.	1	2	3	4	5	0
22. Relationship between GC and area high schools	1	2	3	4	5	0
23. Admissions Office services	1	2	3	4	5	0
24. Financial Aid services	1	2	3	4	5	0
25. Registrar's Office services (records, class registration, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	0
26. PROBE recruitment activities	1	2	3	4	5	0
27. Academic advisement given students by faculty	1	2	3	4	5	0
28. Guidance/Counseling Services	1	2	3	4	5	0
29. Assistance given students in transitioning from H. S. to college	1	2	3	4	5	0

30. In the preceding items (9 - 29) you rated several aspects of the College. Are there any other services or experiences which Gainesville College should be providing that it is not now providing?

____(1) Yes. . . . If yes 30a. Please list:

____(2) No

____(0) Don't Know

(Please use additional paper if needed)

31. Are there any ways that Gainesville College could work with local school systems to encourage students to complete all CPC requirements while in high school?

____(1) Yes. . . . If yes 31a. Please indicate:

____(2) No

____(0) Don't Know

(Please use additional paper if needed)

32. Are there other ways that Gainesville College could work with local school systems to improve education in Northeast Georgia?

- ☐ (1) Yes. . . If yes. . . 32a. Please indicate:
☐ (2) No
☐ (0) Don't Know

(Please use additional paper if needed)

33. Do you employ, supervise, or work with anyone in your job environment who GRADUATED from Gainesville College?

- ☐ (1) Yes. . . If yes. . . 33a. How would you rate the quality of the education received at GC?
☐ (2) No
☐ (0) Not Sure or Not Applicable
- ☐ (1) Excellent
☐ (2) Above Average
☐ (3) Average
- ☐ (4) Poor
☐ (5) Very Poor
☐ (0) Don't Know

IV. PERSONAL INFORMATION

34 - 39. Following are items about yourself, not to identify you as an individual, but to determine opinions of broad categories of persons. Please check appropriate responses.

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| 34. Age: | 35. Sex: | 36. Occupational area: | 37. How many years have you been employed in your CURRENT position? |
| ☐ (1) Less than 25 yrs | ☐ (1) Male | ☐ (1) Principal | ☐ (1) 1 year or less |
| ☐ (2) 25 - 34 yrs | ☐ (2) Female | ☐ (2) Counselor | ☐ (4) 11 - 15 years |
| ☐ (3) 35-49 yrs | | | ☐ (2) 2 - 5 years |
| ☐ (4) 50-62 yrs | | | ☐ (5) 16-20 years |
| ☐ (5) Over 62 yrs | | | ☐ (3) 6 -10 years |
| | | | ☐ (6) Over 20 years |

38. Have you ever visited the Gainesville College campus?

- ☐ (1) Yes, during the past year
☐ (2) Yes, but not during the past year
☐ (3) No

39. Did you attend Gainesville College or any other two-year college?

- ☐ (1) Yes, Gainesville College
☐ (2) Yes, a two-year college other than Gainesville College
☐ (3) No

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

40. Gainesville College has just celebrated its 25th anniversary. In the space below, please provide any suggestions which might be helpful as GC positions itself to move successfully into its second quarter century of service to Northeast Georgia. (Please use additional paper if needed)

Thank You!

Please return your completed questionnaire by **NOVEMBER 14, 1990** in the enclosed envelope to:

Office of Planning and Institutional Research

Gainesville College

P. O. Box 1358

Gainesville, GA 30503

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

A Two-Year Unit of the University System of Georgia

P. O. BOX 1358
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30503-1358
404-535-6210

Office of the President

November 1, 1990

Dear :

As part of Gainesville College's continued efforts to serve the educational needs of emerging Northeast Georgia in the best possible way, as well as part of the SACS reaccreditation process, we are conducting our ten-year Community Needs Assessment once again. Samples from several of our publics are being asked to help us to evaluate what we are now doing, and to identify some ways we can better meet the educational needs in our service area. A vital segment of our study includes information from area high schools. Principals and counselors in a sample of the high schools from which the majority of our students come have been selected to be surveyed.

As a high school principal, you can provide some valuable information and insights that would be most helpful to the College in our assessment of community educational needs. We know you are a busy person, so have designed the enclosed questionnaire to take only a few minutes of your time to complete, yet to provide us with information that may be useful in planning better to provide quality educational experiences. Please assist us by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the stamped envelope to the Gainesville College Office of Planning and Institutional Research no later than **November 14, 1990**. All information gathered will be confidential and will not be linked with any individual or institution. For your information, _____ and _____ are included in the counselor survey sample.

We appreciate all the students who come to Gainesville College from _____ High School, and thank you, as well as your counseling staff, for your assistance. The information generated from this survey will assist in positioning Gainesville College as it begins its second quarter century of service to _____ County and Northeast Georgia.

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to call me (404-535-6210) or our Office of Planning and Institutional Research (404-535-6355).

Sincerely yours,

J. Foster Watkins
President

JFW/ddc

Enclosure

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AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

A Two-Year Unit of the University System of Georgia

P. O. BOX 1358
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30503-1358
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If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to call me (404/535-6210) or our Office of Planning and Institutional Research (404/535-6355).

Sincerely yours,

J. Foster Watkins
President

JFW/ddc

Enclosure



Gainesville College

A TWO-YEAR UNIT OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

Post Office Box 1358 • Gainesville, Georgia 30503

December 7, 1990

Dear :

Gainesville College's Community Needs Assessment is in its final stages of data collecting. Have we heard from you? Since responses to the questionnaire are anonymous, we cannot track who has and has not responded.

If you have not had an opportunity to complete the questionnaire, it would be most helpful and appreciated if you would take a few minutes to give us your feedback before Christmas. Another copy of the questionnaire and an addressed stamped envelope are enclosed for your convenience. Please discard if you have already returned the questionnaire you received earlier, and we thank you for taking time to provide us with your ideas and perceptions.

Should you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to give me a call, 404/535-6355.

Thank you for your support of and interest in Gainesville College.

Sincerely yours,

Norma R. Seerley
Coordinator of Assessment

NRS/ddc

Enclosures



HELP!!

During the first week in November you will receive a letter from Dr. J. Foster Watkins, President of Gainesville College, requesting you to complete a questionnaire.

This questionnaire is designed to give you an opportunity to let the College hear from you — How well is the College serving the needs of your high school and Northeast Georgia? What can the College do to improve?

Your responses will provide valuable information and ideas for the College in its efforts to do sound planning and to further improve its programs and services.

Please plan to give your community college the 15-20 minutes needed to complete the questionnaire when it arrives.

THANK YOU

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING THROUGH A COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
GAINESVILLE COLLEGE (GEORGIA) -- 1990

Norma R. Seerley, Ph.D.
and
J. Foster Watkins, Ed.D.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING THROUGH A COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
GAINESVILLE COLLEGE (GEORGIA) -- 1990

ABSTRACT

A Community Needs Assessment conducted by Gainesville College during Fall 1990 to gather data to use in the decision-making and planning processes and to support the ten-year self-study process is described. The primary emphasis of the article concerns methodological aspects of the study.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Norma R. Seerley is Professor Emerita of Sociology of Gainesville College, P.O. Box 1358, Gainesville, 30503, (404) 535-6259.

J. Foster Watkins is President of Gainesville College, P.O. Box 1358, Gainesville, Georgia 30503, (404) 535-6210.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe one aspect of the environmental scanning process, a community needs assessment, used by Gainesville College. Gainesville College is a two-year institution of the University System of Georgia with approximately 2700 students, located about 50 minutes northeast of rapidly growing metropolitan Atlanta. Reflective of the population growth in the area as well as intensive recruitment and retention efforts, the College has experienced over 60 percent growth in student enrollment since 1985. With such changes in the College's student population and environment, it is crucial that the institution be attuned to its impact on its students and its larger community, and to any changing educational needs of its constituency.

With a change in the leadership of Gainesville College nearly nine years ago, a move was made toward data-based management and a commitment was made to broaden involvement in the decision-making and planning processes. An assessment plan was developed and implemented which involves a systematic collection and analysis of a wide variety of in-depth information from the College's various publics on a cyclic basis. Data are gathered from and about students, alumni, and college personnel through the administration of questionnaires in cycles that range from one to four years, while formalized feedback from the College's general public, the community at large, is solicited every ten years in the form of a Community Needs Assessment (CNA). The CNA--the focus of this paper--is cycled to coincide with the College's ten-year Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) self-study accreditation process.

In addition to the data gathered from the populations mentioned above, the environmental scanning process also entails gathering information and data through other means from various other sources. Hence, it should be kept in mind that while the CNA detailed below provides valuable broad, general insights useful for planning and action, the data generated by it are considered along with other available information and data in the College's broader data base.

PURPOSE

The primary, general purposes of Gainesville College's Community Needs Assessment were to gather data to add to the larger existing data base for use in the planning and decision-making processes as described above, and to gather data to support the ten-year SACS self-study process. Specific objectives of the study were (1) to identify felt educational needs and services which Gainesville College might offer; (2) to obtain evaluative feedback from the community concerning the College's ongoing programs, services, personnel, relationships, and facilities; and (3) to heighten awareness of and interest in Gainesville College.

METHODOLOGY

Definition of "Community"

Ideally, a Gainesville College Community Needs Assessment would include feedback from all areas from which the College typically draws its students. However, financial, temporal, and personnel limitations necessitated a compromise in the definition of the College's "community" for the purposes of this survey. It was decided that "community" would be defined to include a five-county area. Approximately 75 percent of the College's students come from these counties, and the area was determined to be adequately representative of the 22-county area of northeast Georgia from which the College typically draws its students.

Population

Two subpopulations in the "community" were identified who it was believed would provide the types of data desired to support the institution's community needs assessment efforts. The two subpopulations from which potential respondents were selected were: (1) community leaders and (2) area high school principals and counselors.

Community leaders were utilized based on several assumptions: (1) it is possible to identify a sample of both general and specialized leaders who adequately represent the general population of the community; (2) compared to the average citizen,

community leaders are more likely to be knowledgeable, and generally concerned about broad social and structural aspects of the community and therefore will provide more usable information; (3) community leaders are typically willing to participate in a study if appropriately legitimized; and (4) it is more economical, less time consuming, and requires less personnel to survey a sample of leaders than a random sample of the larger community, yet broad, general information which is equally useful for planning purposes will be obtained (Nix and Seerley, 1973, pp. 427-438).

The high school principal and counselor subpopulation was selected based on the assumptions that (1) these individuals have an interest in education in general; (2) due to the nature of the positions principals and counselors occupy in the secondary schools and the experiences and contacts afforded through their positions, they hold valuable insights about potential college students that may serve to provide meaningful feedback to the College; and (3) they are in positions where they are likely to receive feedback from their alumni who attend Gainesville College.

Respondent Selection/Data Collection

The data gathering process was tailored differently for the two subpopulations in order to obtain optimal meaningful feedback in a cost-effective and timely fashion. Also, the data gathered were reported separately so that the unique perspectives of each would be reflected, and meaningful feedback in report form could be provided to survey respondents. Different survey instruments were developed for the two subpopulations. Even though many of the dimensions of the College being assessed were included on both survey instruments, each also included items that were especially pertinent to the particular subpopulation. Questionnaire items were designed to collect data concerning these dimensions of the College: (1) attitudes and evaluations of the College--its image, programs (academic and nonacademic), services, personnel, and quality of education received by students served; (2) felt educational needs and services in the community which the College should meet that it is not currently meeting; and (3) perceptions of the College's relationships with the community as a

whole, with area high schools and with postsecondary institutions. Details of the methodology used for each of the subpopulations follow.

Community Leaders--Community Reconnaissance Method. A research method of data collection known as Community Reconnaissance Method--a method used by some sociologists for many years in their community research (Sanders, 1950; Nix and Dudley, 1965; Nix and Seerley, 1971b; Nix and Miller, 1979)--was modified for use by an educational institution. The method was designed to quickly, efficiently, and economically yield broad, general types of information for use in planning by using community leaders as informants (Nix and Seerley, 1971a, pp.62-69). While it cannot be guaranteed that the views of the leaders who participate in a community reconnaissance study will provide a broad, comprehensive community perspective, the method does involve an effort to include respondents representative of the numerous types and levels of community groups, thereby providing an opportunity whereby the broader community can be represented through responses given to the questionnaire items by selected leader respondents. It should be noted, however, that even though views of groups typically underrepresented (such as minorities, females, and lower socioeconomic groups) are included in the data gathered, the views of these groups are reflected only to the extent that the leader respondents who represent the people of these groups could and do communicate the views of the groups. In spite of this possible pitfall of the method, the reconnaissance approach to gaining data concerning the community has proven to be an economical, quick technique for gathering broad, general types of information useful for planning purposes not only for community developers (Nix and Dressel, 1979) but for educational institutions as well (Gainesville Junior College, 1980, pp. 14-62; Brunswick Junior College, 1982, pp. 19-36).

Selection of Leader Sample. Two methods commonly used to identify community leaders were used--the panel nomination and the positional methods. By using this

combination of techniques, it is believed that an adequate sample of both general and specialized leaders who serve to represent the general population of the community is tapped to participate in the survey. The **panel nomination method** involves the selection of a broadly representative and knowledgeable group to serve as a panel to fill out leader nomination questionnaires. The Gainesville College Foundation Board of Trustees served in this capacity. A letter from the College President was mailed to each trustee along with a nomination questionnaire; and a follow-up letter was sent three weeks later. The trustees were asked to name four persons from each of the five counties in the College's "community" as defined for the study whom they consider to be most influential in general community affairs. In addition, they were asked to name people considered to be the most influential leaders in fifteen specialized categories for each of the five counties being used in the study. The specialized areas were: business/industry/ banking, education, political, health and medicine, cultural affairs, welfare and social services, civic affairs, religion, women, labor and working class, minorities, communication, recreation, agriculture, and law and law enforcement. To help assure confidentiality of responses, panel members were directed to mail their nominations to a University of Georgia Research Consultant who worked with the College in executing the study. It was determined that those mentioned two or more times would become part of the leader pool from which the sample would be drawn.

The second technique utilized to delineate community leaders, **positional method**, involves preparing a list of top positional leaders from available official documents, and selecting from this list persons who occupy key positions in designated areas such as government, business and industry, civic and cultural affairs, education, law, agriculture, recreation, religion, communications, etc.

Due to the time and financial constraints that existed, it was predetermined that a total of approximately 100 community leaders should be surveyed, about one-half from the College's "home" county, and the other half from the area counties. Slightly different approaches were used in the development of the potential respondent list for the home county than for the area counties. Potential home county respondents were

selected by combining those persons nominated by the panel two or more times with a positional list. By eliminating overlap and assuring adequate representation in the specialized categories and typically underrepresented groups (minorities, women, etc.), a list of 59 potential respondents from the home county resulted. As it turned out, all who emerged on the final list had also received at least two nominations by the panel.

More respondents in the area counties than in the home county were selected on a positional basis, although all individuals listed two or more times by the nominating panel were included in the sample. In order to provide some consistency in the process and to assure representation of the typically underrepresented groups, it was decided that at least one individual would be surveyed in each of the area counties who occupies a position in each of the following areas: political; education; communication; women; business/industry/banking; cultural affairs; civic affairs (Chamber of Commerce); religion, law/law enforcement; and minorities, where relevant. A total of 53 persons was identified in the area counties as potential respondents.

A list of 112 potential leader respondents ultimately emerged. Ninety (80 percent) of these subsequently participated in the survey.

Community Leader Data-Collection Procedure. Interviews were scheduled over a two-week period of time, three days each week. In preparation for the interviewing, the College President sent a personal letter informing each potential respondent of the nature of the study and the planned procedure. Appointment calls followed shortly.

The leaders were invited to attend a semi-structured interview session in which a modified group interview would occur. Appointment times for the group interviews were preset, and each respondent was allowed to choose the time that suited best. As many as 12 persons and as few as one person were scheduled for a given time period.

As the respondents arrived for the interview, a brief oral introduction and overview of the study were presented before giving them the questionnaire. During the

introductory comments the respondents were encouraged to ask for any clarification needed as they responded to the questionnaire items. Respondents then completed their questionnaires at large tables provided, and at their own pace. Completed questionnaires were deposited anonymously in a designated box as the respondents departed. Those unable to attend a scheduled interview session were given the option of completing the questionnaire in their own setting and mailing it to the College's Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Where possible, these questionnaires were hand delivered; a few were mailed. Of the 110 leaders who had agreed to participate in the survey, 72 personally attended an interview session and 38 received hand-delivered or mailed questionnaires. A follow-up letter from the President was sent to those who had received the delivered or mailed questionnaires. Of the 38 delivered or mailed, 18 were completed and returned to the College.

Principals and Counselors--Mailed Questionnaires. The mailed questionnaire method was utilized to collect the desired data from the selected principals and counselors. This technique was chosen for a variety of reasons, including: many individuals in numerous high schools which are located in a relatively large geographical area could be contacted concurrently; the technique is a relatively economical way to obtain data; respondents may respond at their own convenience; and since the targeted population was expected to have an understanding of and vested interest in education, they would likely respond to a mailed questionnaire from a College located within their area. There are disadvantages, as well, including: the return of all questionnaires is difficult to achieve; if the survey is anonymous, as was this one, it is not known who has and who has not responded and why; a question may have different meanings to different people; and respondents do not have an opportunity to ask for clarification of any questionnaire items (Orlich, 1978, p. 7). In spite of these and other potential disadvantages, it was believed that with the type of relationship the College has maintained with its area high school principals and

counselors, a relatively good response rate would occur, and those who would respond would do so thoughtfully and provide a meaningful evaluation of the College and educational needs from their perspectives which would be useful in the College's planning process.

Selection of Principals and Counselors. Twenty-one high schools were identified in the defined community as the high schools from which the College draws students. It was determined to use all of the 21 principals and 56 counselors employed in these schools.

Principals and Counselor Data Collection Procedure. The questionnaires were mailed along with a personalized letter from the College President. Respondents were requested to return their completed questionnaires within two weeks in a stamped envelope addressed to the College Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Follow-up letters were mailed approximately two weeks after the due date. Ultimately, 56 percent returned questionnaires.

USE OF FINDINGS

Data from this Community Needs Assessment were widely reported to many of the College's publics, including the respondents; the media; College alumni; College faculty, staff, and administrators; and other community college institutional researchers. However, these data, combined with other available information and data gathered through the environmental scanning and assessment processes, become meaningful and productive only when used by the institution in the planning and decision-making processes to facilitate meeting the institution's stated mission in an optimal manner.

Following are a few examples of specific actions which have been taken over the past year that were encouraged as a result of the CNA findings and that were found to be generally supported with other environmental scanning data: (1) increased efforts with the area media through a luncheon on campus, a media survey, additional news releases; (2) suggested programs/workshops/training programs reviewed by the Continuing

Education/Public Services personnel, and responses to expressed needs planned; (3) increased efforts in foreign languages and a move toward a multicultural emphasis in the curriculum; (4) continued exploration with four-year institutions about the possibility of Gainesville College playing a host role in order to better meet technical/engineering educational needs in the area; (5) continued efforts to recruit and better serve minorities and non-traditional students; (6) major emphasis given to the purchase of equipment that will enhance the institution's "high tech" capability in a Title III Strengthening Institution Program proposal which is currently pending; (7) increased efforts in the science-based emphasis in the pre-engineering program; (8) many Self Study recommendations strengthened by the CNA findings, such as the recommendation put forth that the Advancement Office be allocated additional personnel; and (9) additional early intervention efforts made through increased numbers of pre-college students on campus--hosting a literary meet, science fair, foreign language conference, College Visitation Days for high school seniors, and piloting efforts of multicultural education with pre-college students.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

As with most research, several methodological options were considered during the planning stages, including the following: (1) a random sampling of the general public; (2) one-on-one interviews rather than the "group interview"; (3) use of various types of clubs and organizations to provide feedback in either questionnaire form or through meetings with the individual groups; (4) "Town Hall" meetings to discuss and prioritize community education needs; and (5) inviting identified respondents to the campus to complete questionnaires and/or provide feedback through small group discussions.

Obviously, there are pros and cons to each of the above approaches, just as there are with the techniques ultimately used for the study. Cost, personnel, and time demands of most of the alternative methods were what precluded serious consideration of their use. Also, it was felt that the club/organization and "Town Hall" approaches

were likely to elicit responses from a more select segment of the population, and would probably not be as representative of the community as the approach used. Further, bringing the respondents to the campus was likely to result in biased responses if the respondents were asked to complete questionnaires while being entertained by the College.

As was anticipated, the value of the data generated by the Community Needs Assessment has proven to be useful for planning and action purposes as demonstrated in the examples given in the preceding section. Less obvious spin-offs of the study have included the interest in and support and understanding of the College that were generated by the actual response to the survey instruments and the involved participation in the feedback sessions that were held on campus.

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